

# Fighting antimicrobial resistance as an animal health professional

Misuse and overuse of antimicrobials in animals can lead to the development of resistant pathogens and undermine global health. As you have the power to prescribe and use antimicrobials, you have an essential role to play in the fight against antimicrobial resistance. Let's preserve the efficacy of antimicrobials by using them responsibly and only when necessary.

Here are answers to the most frequent questions you may have.

## When should I prescribe antimicrobials?

- After conducting a clinical examination of the animal(s), establishing a medical diagnosis, and considering other options or alternatives.
- Never in replacement of good animal husbandry practices, hygiene, biosecurity and vaccination programmes.

## How should I prescribe antimicrobials?

- By basing my choice of antimicrobial agent on clinical experience and diagnostic laboratory information.
- By taking into consideration the [WOAH list of antimicrobial agents of veterinary importance](#).
- By providing animal owners with detailed information on treatment protocols and withdrawal periods.

## What should I consider in order to choose the appropriate antimicrobial?

- Farm records of previous antimicrobial use and epidemiological history of the farm.
- Clinical experience and diagnostic insights.
- Diagnostic laboratory information when available (culture and susceptibility testing).
- Pharmacodynamics (activity against pathogens involved).
- Pharmacokinetics (tissue distribution, efficacy at infection site).
- [WOAH list of antimicrobials of veterinary importance](#).

## When can I use extra-label or off-label antimicrobials?

- In agreement with national legislation.
- When appropriate registered product are not available.
- With my client's informed consent.

## What should I do if first-line treatment fails?

- Report lack of expected efficacy to the national competent authorities.
- Base the second-line treatment on diagnostic test results, including susceptibility testing.
- Use a different class or sub-class in the absence of test results.
- Only use combinations of antimicrobials if supported by scientific evidence.

## What should I write on my prescriptions for antimicrobials?

- Dosage regimen (dose, treatment intervals, duration of treatment).
- Withdrawal periods for eggs, meat and milk, as well as other animal products.
- Amount of antimicrobial to be provided, depending on dosage and number of animals.
- Labelling of all veterinary drugs supplied.

## What else can I do on a daily basis to help curb AMR?

- Educate myself on the AMR situation, on good practices and recommendations.
- Educate people around me on AMR. It is a global challenge which concerns us all.
- Advocate for alternatives to antimicrobials such as vaccination.
- Advocate for prevention measures such as biosecurity and good husbandry.
- Advise against use of antimicrobials for growth promotion.
- Collaborate with other sectors to address this as a One Health challenge.