How to Administer Eye Ointment

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

step-by-step TIPS

How to administer eye ointment

dministering eye ointment to your pet is generally not difficult, but care must be taken to do it properly. We have made it easier by providing the following step-by-step directions of how to give these medications. If your veterinarian prescribes eye ointment for your pet, it may help to have one of the veterinary staff show you how to apply it.

1. Wash your hands.

2. Talk to your pet in a happy voice and take him to a convenient location, along with the medication.

3. **For dogs:** Place your dog's hindquarters against something so he cannot back away from you. Some people have found they have better control if they place the dog on a surface up above the floor. If you do so, make sure you have assistance, so the dog will not jump or fall off the table and hurt himself. The person assisting you should hold the dog around the shoulders and chest.

   For cats, small pets, and large birds: Sometimes it is helpful to wrap the pet in a blanket or towel so just her head is sticking out. **For cats and rabbits**, place the pet's hindquarters against something so she cannot back away from you; or after wrapping in a towel, it may help to place the animal between your knees as you sit on the floor. Some people like to place the pet at eye level - such as on a table. In some cases, it may be necessary for another person to assist you in holding your pet while you give the medication.

4. If discharge is present, the area should be cleansed with a sterile eyewash solution prior to applying the medication.

5. Remove the cap from the tube of medication and place it on a clean surface.

6. Steady the pet's head with one hand and lift upward, so the pet's eyes are looking towards the ceiling.

7. Pull down gently on the lower lid with a finger or thumb, depending upon which eye you are treating.

8. Rest your other hand, holding the medication, on top of your pet's head. Be sure the tip of the tube is pointed away

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from your pet's eye so if your pet jerks, the tube tip will not injure the eye.

9. Hold the tube of ointment about one inch from the eye and apply a short ribbon of ointment along the inner edge of the lower lid, starting at the inside corner of the eye.

- Rotate the tube when you reach the outer portion of the eye to help detach the ointment from the tube.
- Have your pet blink, and gently hold the eyelid shut.
- Gently massage the closed eyelid to disperse the ointment. Ointments will blur your animal's vision for a few minutes after administration. Prevent your pet from bumping into things and becoming injured.
- Give your pet plenty of praise, and possibly a treat. This will make next time easier. And remember, the quicker you can give the medication, the easier it is on both of you.
- Place the cap back on the tube.
- Wash your hands.

Tips and Precautions

- Never touch the tip of the tube or dropper to the pet's eye, lids, or eyelashes. Do not touch the inside of the cap or the dropper or tube tip with your fingers, as this will also contaminate the medication.
- If you are applying more than one medication to the eye, allow 5 minutes between applications so one medication is not washed out by the next. Be sure not to interchange the caps of the medications.
- If you miss a dose, apply it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the application you missed and go back to the regular schedule.
- Some medications may cause the eye to sting for a short time when first applied.
- Always follow the dosage instructions provided by your veterinarian. If you have difficulty applying the medication, contact your veterinarian.
- The medication should only be given to the pet for whom it was prescribed.
- Keep all medications out of the reach of children and pets.

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