

## *What's in Your Medicine Chest?*

*Denise Talbott, DVM*

Folks often ask me what I routinely keep around to treat various maladies in my herd. I am going to try to break this down to items that can be purchased by anyone and then those items that I keep that are prescription only. Exhibitors lament the fact that often/usually they cannot obtain these items from their veterinarian without bringing the animal in. I will tell you that this really isn't often a concern that the vet may be losing a possible office call charge from you; it is more often due to practice laws and standards in a particular state and also liability issues. To dispense medications in most states, there has to exist the animal-client-veterinarian contract or relationship. Without all three of those components in the interaction, a veterinarian may be open to action by their state board. Sometimes a veterinarian is comfortable with simply a verbal consultation, but don't get up in arms when your veterinarian will not dispense the medications you want without seeing the animal. Even my veterinary colleague maintains records on the procedures I ask him to do on my animals to satisfy the requirements of the North Carolina Practice Act. As much as veterinarians are committed to helping animals, your pet isn't worth possible action by the Board or liability if they dispense something and the person decides to use it incorrectly. Without a record of consultation and exam it is possible to be in deep water. Now, on with the show.

I keep a work bench type chest which holds most of my medical supplies. I also am fortunate to have two old surgical lamps to illuminate the top of the chest where I work with animals from nail trims to checking teeth to minor procedures.

### Supplies

Cotton swabs

Gauze squares

Hemostats

Scissors

Scalpel blades

Dosing syringes- just like syringes for injections except tip not fitted to hold needles

Penlight

Nail trimmers- I personally like the ones that are 10-15 bucks and look like they could take off a toe (which they can! )

Pliers of various shapes and sizes along – also sidecutters (huh? You say?? Well, if you ever mess up an eartag, you'll need them)

Dental Floss

Dental Pack- rabbit pack can be obtained from Spectrum Surgical Instruments- you really only need the rongeurs and the spatulas but it is expensive- \$322.

Moisturizing eye drops

Disposable exam gloves—good to have when digging out impacted boars- you know what I am talking about!

Betadine ( yes there is some discussion about this, but it is what I use when I feel I need to)

## Medications

Children's Ibuprofen

Generic loperimide- (think Immodium ®)

Calcium based Antacids

Critical Care- this may be Rx only, but if it is and you can't get it,, just use pellet fines

Vit C powder (I used to keep injectable too, but never used it enough to warrant keeping it around)

Cherry Syrup from Pharmacy- a spoonful of this helps the medicine go down

## Medications needing an RX

Antibiotic Eye Drops- Tobramycin\*, Ofloxacin, Triple Abx , and something with a steroid- the price of ophthalmic preparations has gone through the roof- when you can get them. On my last order I could only get Tobramycin and Ofloxacin

Revolution®

- I do keep Ivermectin around too, but only for those animals coming into the caviary until they get on my rotation

## Antibiotics

Sulfa-Trimethoprim suspension

Cephalexin- 500 mg capsules

Enrofloxacin- Baytril ®

## Other medications

Acepromazine- for those cranky sows

Isoflurane

IV fluids- for subcutaneous use

Dexamethasone- ( old veterinary saying, no animal should be allowed to die without benefit of steroids- well, I won't go that far, and I think its use limited, but I feel I have saved some dying sows with it)

Calcium Gluconate 10%

Sterile Water for Injection

Oxytocin

Injectable Bicarbonate

1% Lidocaine

50% Dextrose for injection

Syringes and needles of various sizes and gauges

With these tools, I can pretty much deal with everything I want to deal with. I have a local veterinary friend who will do my major surgeries for me. I am not going to go into how I use everything right now, not because anything is a secret, just because it would take too long. Keep posted – I will be discussing various problems in upcoming articles. When I use a certain medication you have noticed I always give the dosage in the article. Lots of you will use other antibiotics than those I have listed; if you have good luck with them that's fine. We all have our set routines on how we handle issues. Valerie Blaes and I discuss this all the time. She and I handle some things very differently but as long as there is a rational

basis for what you do I certainly have no problem with it. Often once we have success dealing with an issue in a certain fashion, that way becomes the method of choice for us. Not a thing wrong with that. What we do and think keeps evolving as we think of new ways to handle situations or see a new twist on a problem.

A brief story from my younger days: I rode on farm calls with an older vet out of Warsaw, Ohio. One morning we had a milk fever call (hypocalcemia) and when we got there and were treating the animal with IV calcium, the farmer said, well, I gave her a shot of penicillin, too. And the vet said, Why? You know that doesn't treat milk fever! And the fellow never answered. I have long since come to realize why that fellow did that. He wanted to be doing SOMETHING, useless as it was. So, let's just try to remember to have a rational thought about why we do things and what is likely to help the situation. Feeling impotent in a situation isn't a good feeling, but don't let that drive you to doing something that is totally without merit.

Hope to hear from some of you about what you would like to see in future columns. This one was directly the result of folks asking me what I routinely have and use.

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