

Making Veterinary Visits Stress-Free for Your Pet



If your dog or cat experiences fear, anxiety, or stress during veterinary visits, your veterinarian may recommend a Pre-Visit Pharmaceutical (PVP). These medications are used alongside training, behavioral, or environmental modifications to help make veterinary visits less stressful and more successful. PVPs work by targeting specific hormones associated with fear and anxiety, reducing stress so your pet can have a more positive experience during veterinary care.

Why Consider PVPs for Your Pet?

- **Reduce Stress & Anxiety:** Helps your pet feel more comfortable during handling, exams, or procedures.
- **Build Positive Associations:** Encourages a lifelong positive relationship with veterinary care.
- **Ensure Thorough Care:** Eases stress, allowing your pet to receive necessary medical attention.

Debunking the Myth: "I Don't Want to Drug My Pet"

- **PVPs Help Calm:** The goal is not to sedate your pet but to reduce fear, anxiety, and stress.
- **Complementary Approach:** PVPs are combined with training and environmental modifications.
- **Promoting Lifelong Care:** Addressing fear and anxiety now can prevent negative associations and ensure your pet receives comprehensive care throughout their life.

Common PVP Options

For Dogs:

- Alprazolam
- Clonidine
- Gabapentin
- Trazodone

For Cats:

- Gabapentin
- Trazodone
- Pregabalin (Bonqat)

Note: These medications are used "off-label" for pets, which is a common and safe practice in veterinary medicine. This list is not comprehensive and others may be appropriate for your pet. Your veterinary team will guide you through the process and discuss any potential side effects.





How to Use PVPs

1 Trial at Home First

- Give the medication at home on a test day to assess its effects before using it for the veterinary visit.
- Note the time it takes to take effect (typically 1–3 hours) and how long the effects last (often 8–12 hours).

2 Document Observations

- Time to effect.
- Behavioral changes (e.g., reduced barking or pacing).
- Duration of the medication's effect.

3 Report Back to Your Veterinary Team

- Share your findings to adjust the medication plan if needed.
- Adhere to the care plan your veterinary team provided, paying close attention to the timing and dispensing of PVPs.

4 Victory Visits

- Schedule a "practice" visit to help your pet build confidence with the medication and the veterinary setting.

Questions? Reach out to your veterinary team to discuss PVP options and how they can help improve your pet's veterinary experience.