



Try these tips to alleviate client concerns and help them learn to love the effects of PVPs.

Helping Clients Embrace Pre-Visit Pharmaceuticals

When the veterinarian prescribes pre-visit pharmaceuticals (PVPs), it's normal to expect clients to be concerned about trying something new. Clients love their pets and are often fearful about veterinary care because of the pet's FAS level, or how that FAS manifests.

Explaining the What

Some common client concerns are: worrying that the pet may have an adverse reaction to the medication, that the team thinks the pet is "bad," we just want to "drug" the pet, or their pet will be overly sedated/harmed. Knowing why we prescribe, how we prescribe, and what to expect will help alleviate those concerns. How we talk to clients about PVPs will directly impact compliance.

It's useful to educate clients about the pet's FAS score, find a common ground of empathy for the pet's FAS, and show them we have the knowledge and tools to help their pet. Clients can sometimes be embarrassed if their pets "behave badly" or if a visit must be paused and/or rescheduled. How we frame the conversation matters.

Explaining what Pre-Visit Pharmaceuticals Are

Here are some helpful phrases to try when explaining PVPs to your clients:

- 🐾 These medicines are a wonderful tool we use to reduce your pet's Fear, Anxiety, and Stress (FAS) during veterinary visits.
- 🐾 We CARE about your pet's physical health and their emotional well-being!

When your pet's FAS is reduced, veterinary care is easier for them, and the veterinary team.

- Decreased FAS allows us to provide the best emotional and physical care
- Coming to the veterinary office will be easier for your pet
- Easier examinations and treatments
- More accurate vital signs and test results
- Allows us to decrease the doses (hence reducing the risk) of sedatives or anesthesia when given in advance
- Many pets have reduced FAS for future visits when the FAS cycle is broken
- Decreases your pet building more fearful memories of veterinary care



Using Analogies

- 🐾 Analogy can be a helpful way to explain PVPs to pet owners.
- 🐾 If a pet is limping, this is a sign of pain such as from an injury or arthritis. We work hard to relieve their pain with medicine as quickly as possible while we make a plan for diagnosis and ongoing treatment.
- 🐾 If a pet has an elevated FAS score, this is a sign of emotional pain. The good news is we have medicine we can use to relieve emotional pain as quickly as possible to facilitate further care, just like we would for physical pain.
- 🐾 **Medicine to reduce FAS helps pets feel better, and we love helping pets and their families.**

Telling clients what to expect

- 🐾 Explaining to clients in advance what to expect may alleviate their fears. Fear Free is for humans, too! Clients feeling less stress and uncertainty will be more compliant.
- 🐾 Empathetic and caring analogy can help here, too. Common fears among humans might be flying or having a root canal. (Avoid going into the details of these fears, as you might accidentally trigger fear in your client just by discussing them! Use your judgment.) Providing supplements or medicines in advance of those events improves the experience for everyone. It works for pets, too!

Keys for Success

The key takeaways here:

- *PVPs are a wonderful tool we are so glad to be able to offer our patients.*
- *The veterinary team cares deeply about creating a good experience for the pet.*
- *Every pet is unique and the medicine(s) are chosen with care and consideration.*

Important points to share with clients:

- Every PVP plan is personalized for that specific pet.
- Age, breed, health history, FAS score, planned procedure(s), and other medications are all part of the decision.
- The medicine(s) chosen are given at an appropriate dose for their specific pet, from very low doses for mild FAS up to multiple agents at higher doses for high FAS pets.
- PVPs are generally not intended for deep sedation.
- The goal is usually to reduce FAS to a level more like this individual pet's baseline.
- Based on your knowledge of the pet and the doses selected, tell the client exactly what you hope or expect to see.
- Occasionally, even with PVPs a pet's FAS may remain too high, at which point additional medicines or trying again another day will be recommended. Setting this expectation in advance is beneficial if the clinician has any doubt about the effects of the medicine for that specific patient.



Monique Feyrecilde, BA, LVT, VTS (Behavior)