

# **Mount Berry Animal Hospital**

**2965 Martha Berry Hwy.  
Rome, GA 30165**

Phone: (706) 232-0364

FAX: (706) 234-2228

To our clients,

A recent trend in television advertising and home telemarketing offers Internet or mail-order medications for your pet at apparently reduced costs. While we are happy to provide prescriptions for needed medications obtained from legal and reputable sources other than our pharmacy, we do have very real concerns regarding the companies marketing these products to you. Our concerns for the safety and well being of your pet are our number one priority.

In dealing with prescription medications it is important to recognize that federal and state laws apply to our pets as they do to humans. Many of these laws are confusing and complex but are designed to protect the patient and reduce the risk of inappropriate medicating. One of the most important aspects involved in prescribing a drug is the establishment of a valid doctor/patient/client relationship. This relationship is essential in prescribing medications for the protection of the patient and the veterinarian. It is also required by the State licensing Board in order to write any prescription. In the absence of a valid relationship it is illegal to prescribe any drug for any reason. Unfortunately, many of the tactics employed by the Internet pharmacies or mail-order houses are aimed at circumventing this relationship in the guise of saving a few dollars. Many times the prescriptions will be filled over the phone without the proper authorization from the veterinarian. This is equivalent to the "slamming" techniques employed by many telemarketers but with the potential for grave harm to your pet.

The major veterinary pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors do not sell medications to these companies because of the absence of a valid doctor-patient relationship with the clients they have contacted. The companies in question rely on secondary gray to black market sources to obtain their inventory of these items. These sources are either foreign or from veterinarians who have breached their ethics and are diverting these products to their warehouses. Many of these drugs obtained through potentially illegal channels are regulated prescription -only medications and are not safely administered without a veterinarian's care, pre-testing or follow-up testing to determine organ function and the potential for toxicity or side-effects. These concerns have prompted most, if not all, of the drug manufacturers to rescind their product warranty or guarantee if the product has not been obtained through the proper channels.

Our hospital has adopted the following policy out of concern for your pet's safety: We will prescribe medications for our active clients as long as the owner complies with our monitoring recommendations.

We will only script to pharmacies with a valid Georgia Pharmacy License. (This burden of proof will be your responsibility, unless we already have record of the pharmacies' license.) We will ascertain to the best of our ability that these pharmacies are following proper procedures under the laws of Georgia and the United States. If a company is found to be noncompliant, we will refuse to write a prescription to be filled by said company.

We maintain an in-house pharmacy for our clients' convenience as well as to assure that products are obtained from reputable sources with the proper packaging and controlled shipping practices. Our purpose is to provide a reliable source for medications while maintaining the doctor/patient/client relationship so as to serve your pet's health needs as safely, efficaciously, and conveniently as possible.

More information regarding concerns with internet purchases can be found at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov).

Sincerely,

The Doctors and Staff of Mount Berry Animal Hospital