

MEDIA RELEASE

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Veterinarians concerned by reports of veterinary drug being used as a COVID-19 treatment in humans

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) is extremely concerned by reports that Ivermectin - a veterinary drug commonly used to treat parasites in animals, is being used by some Australians as a human treatment for COVID-19.

While a version of Ivermectin is sometimes prescribed by doctors, to treat parasites in humans, the drug is more commonly used by veterinarians, for the prevention and treatment of parasites in animals - particularly large animals. Importantly, ivermectin preparations for animals are very different from those approved for human use.

“Large animal drugs are often concentrated because they are used in species that weigh a lot more than humans do. You should never use medications intended for animals on yourself,” said AVA Head of Veterinary and Public Affairs, Dr Cristy Secombe.

Ivermectin has not been approved in Australia to prevent or treat COVID-19. A [review of Ivermectin](#) by the Cochrane Library in July found that there was no evidence to support the use of the drug for treating or preventing COVID-19 infection, noting that the evidence base was limited.

Despite this, a wave of online misinformation touting Ivermectin as a ‘miracle cure’ for COVID-19 has resulted in the increased importation and prescription of the drug for humans [according to the Therapeutic Goods Administration](#) (TGA), who have clearly stated that Ivermectin is not approved to treat COVID-19 in Australia.

“Taking a drug intended for animals can make you seriously ill and be potentially life threatening. If you are worried about COVID-19, please talk to your doctor,” said Dr Secombe.

“We have not received reports of any supply issues of Ivermectin, and there are alternative products veterinarians can use in the event of a temporary shortage, so that animal welfare won’t be negatively impacted” said Dr Secombe.

For further information and requests for interviews, contact the AVA media office on 0439 628 898 or media@ava.com.au.

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) is the only national association representing veterinarians in Australia. Founded in 1921, the AVA today represents 9000 members working in all areas of animal science, health, and welfare.