



Australian Veterinary Association

Veterinary antibiotics – animal handling and care

There is evidence of the spread of resistant bacteria from the human population to animals. People administering antibiotics to animals are also at risk of developing resistance through exposure to antibiotics. People in contact with treated animals should follow these guidelines to help minimise these risks.

People who are aware that they have an antibiotic-resistant bacterial infection (such as MRSA or ESBL E coli) should minimise their contact with animals. If contact cannot be avoided with animals, special care should be taken to minimise exposure of animals – wash hands, treat and cover open wounds, use plastic gloves and avoid contamination of feeds or food with human body fluids.

People involved with routine care of farm animals should take care with personal hygiene, to cover open wounds, to avoid contamination of feed with human fluids, and to use plastic gloves for routine procedures including cleaning of feed utensils and troughs.

People administering antibiotics to animals should pay extra attention to personal hygiene. They should limit their exposure to the antibiotics administered (through direct skin contact, accidental ingestion or inhalation of medication).

When treating intensively raised animals the antimicrobial mixing procedure should be undertaken in a way that reduces antibiotic particles entering the air.

Milking staff on dairy farms should use disposable plastic gloves to protect cattle from human pathogens.



Handwashing and plastic disposable gloves should be used in routine husbandry procedures including assisted births, and any invasive livestock procedures such as castration, dehorning or tail docking.

Patients in community care facilities should wash hands before and after handling communal pets.

Veterinarians should inform clients of the need for appropriate hygiene for staff undertaking routine husbandry for treated animals.