

# Behavioral Meds and Your Pet

What's Normal, What's Not, & What To Expect

## Consult Your Vet

Advice on med types and dosage should only come from vets. What works for a neighbor's pet may be dangerous for yours. Pet and human dosages are very different, so never dabble on your own. If you see concerning behaviors such as aggression, confusion, refusal to eat, etc. contact your vet right away. Finally, continuity can be very beneficial in this process. If the practice you visit has multiple vets, request the same one each time. If you see concerning behaviors, like excessive barking, aggression, or irritability, let your vet know!

## Week 1

Pets typically start at low doses, but it's common to see loss of appetite, nausea, or even vomiting at first. Some pets become clingy, others are avoidant. Some seem out of sorts, sleep excessively, or even drool, which may indicate too high a starting dose. Let your vet know. Occasionally, pets have no noticeable side effects at all but to be safe, spend lots of time observing your pet this week.

## Weeks 2 & 3

Early side effects should start to subside and you may notice some improvements at this point. If you started at a very low dose, your vet may increase at this point.

## Weeks 4 to 6+

The full effects of the dosage should occur now. Your pet should be back to their normal self, though you may notice some ongoing appetite decrease. If you have not seen much behavioral improvement, your vet may increase dosage, add a second medication, or even change to another med entirely. This is normal and common!

## General Info

- Meds often taste horrible, especially for cats
- Pilling can be worse than no meds at all, so ask about compounding into treats, flavored liquid or transdermal for lower-stress administration
- Some meds are cumulative and take time while others are situational or "as needed"
- Give daily meds at consistent times
- Missing doses or stopping suddenly can be very distressing - stick to a schedule!

