

firstline[®]

Strong veterinary teams, compassionate client and patient care

INCLUDES THE
dvm360[™]
toolkit

Pet obesity



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A painless career choice

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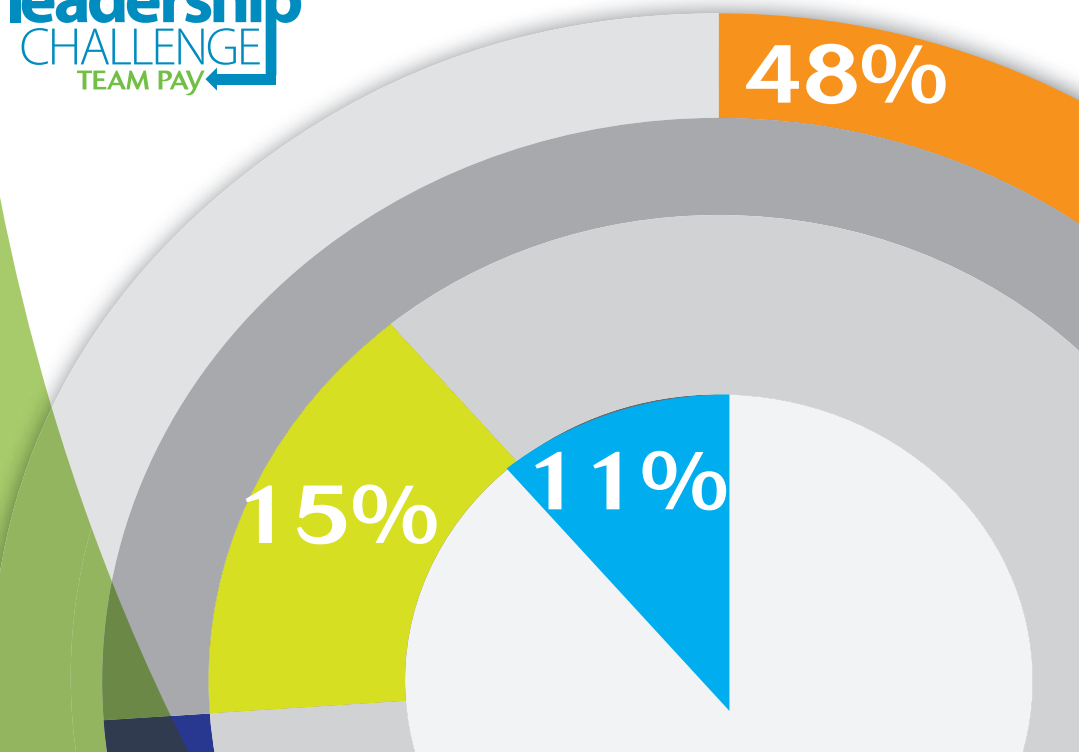
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and still be friends

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dvm360
leadership
CHALLENGE
TEAM PAY

p6



UBM

THE REAL-BEEF CHEWABLE. REAL EASY PREVENTION.

It's easy to see how the use of HEARTGARD® Plus (ivermectin/pyrantel) supports your recommendation for year-round heartworm disease prevention. HEARTGARD Plus is:

- The only heartworm preventive that comes in the Real-Beef Chewable
- The heartworm preventive dogs love to take¹
- The #1 most requested heartworm preventive²
- Backed by the Plus Customer Satisfaction Guarantee³

Heartgard®
(ivermectin/pyrantel) **Plus**



IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: HEARTGARD® Plus (ivermectin/pyrantel) is well tolerated. All dogs should be tested for heartworm infection before starting a preventive program. Following the use of HEARTGARD Plus, digestive and neurological side effects have rarely been reported. For more information, please visit www.HEARTGARD.com.



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¹ Of dogs showing a preference in two studies, all dogs preferred HEARTGARD Plus Chewables to TRIFEXIS™ (spinosad + milbemycin oxime) beef-flavored chewable tablets; Executive Summary VS-USA-37807 and VS-USA-37808.

² Opinion Research Corporation, Heartworm Prevention Medication Study, 2012. Data on file at Merial.

³ Ask your Merial Sales Representative for full guarantee details.

See brief summary on page 01

Power of
12
JoinPowerof12.com

Heartgard® Plus

(ivermectin/pyrantel)

CHEWABLES

CAUTION: Federal (U.S.A.) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

INDICATIONS: For use in dogs to prevent canine heartworm disease by eliminating the tissue stage of heartworm larvae (*Dirofilaria immitis*) for a month (30 days) after infection and for the treatment and control of ascarids (*Toxocara canis*, *Toxascaris leonina*) and hookworms (*Ancylostoma caninum*, *Uncinaria stenocephala*, *Ancylostoma braziliense*).

DOSAGE: HEARTGARD® Plus (ivermectin/pyrantel) should be administered orally at monthly intervals at the recommended minimum dose level of 6 mcg of ivermectin per kilogram (2.72 mcg/lb) and 5 mg of pyrantel (as pamoate salt) per kg (2.27 mg/lb) of body weight. The recommended dosing schedule for prevention of canine heartworm disease and for the treatment and control of ascarids and hookworms is as follows:

Dog Weight	Chewables Per Month	Ivermectin Content	Pyrantel Content	Color Coding On Foil Backing and Carton
Up to 25 lb	1	68 mcg	57 mg	Blue
26 to 50 lb	1	136 mcg	114 mg	Green
51 to 100 lb	1	272 mcg	227 mg	Brown

HEARTGARD Plus is recommended for dogs 6 weeks of age and older. For dogs over 100 lb use the appropriate combination of these chewables.

ADMINISTRATION: Remove only one chewable at a time from the foil-backed blister card. Return the card with the remaining chewables to its box to protect the product from light. Because most dogs find HEARTGARD Plus palatable, the product can be offered to the dog by hand. Alternatively, it may be added intact to a small amount of dog food. The chewable should be administered in a manner that encourages the dog to chew, rather than to swallow without chewing. Chewables may be broken into pieces and fed to dogs that normally swallow treats whole.

Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed for a few minutes after administration to ensure that part of the dose is not lost or rejected. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost, redosing is recommended.

HEARTGARD Plus should be given at monthly intervals during the period of the year when mosquitoes (vectors), potentially carrying infective heartworm larvae, are active. The initial dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's first exposure to mosquitoes. The final dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's last exposure to mosquitoes.

When replacing another heartworm preventive product in a heartworm disease preventive program, the first dose of HEARTGARD Plus must be given within a month (30 days) of the last dose of the former medication.

If the interval between doses exceeds a month (30 days), the efficacy of ivermectin can be reduced. Therefore, for optimal performance, the chewable must be given once a month on or about the same day of the month. If treatment is delayed, whether by a few days or many, immediate treatment with HEARTGARD Plus and resumption of the recommended dosing regimen will minimize the opportunity for the development of adult heartworms.

Monthly treatment with HEARTGARD Plus also provides effective treatment and control of ascarids (*T. canis*, *T. leonina*) and hookworms (*A. caninum*, *U. stenocephala*, *A. braziliense*). Clients should be advised of measures to be taken to prevent reinfection with intestinal parasites.

EFFICACY: HEARTGARD Plus Chewables, given orally using the recommended dose and regimen, are effective against the tissue larval stage of *D. immitis* for a month (30 days) after infection and, as a result, prevent the development of the adult stage. HEARTGARD Plus Chewables are also effective against canine ascarids (*T. canis*, *T. leonina*) and hookworms (*A. caninum*, *U. stenocephala*, *A. braziliense*).

ACCEPTABILITY: In acceptability and field trials, HEARTGARD Plus was shown to be an acceptable oral dosage form that was consumed at first offering by the majority of dogs.

PRECAUTIONS: All dogs should be tested for existing heartworm infection before starting treatment with HEARTGARD Plus which is not effective against adult *D. immitis*. Infected dogs must be treated to remove adult heartworms and microfilariae before initiating a program with HEARTGARD Plus.

While some microfilariae may be killed by the ivermectin in HEARTGARD Plus at the recommended dose level, HEARTGARD Plus is not effective for microfilariae clearance. A mild hypersensitivity-type reaction, presumably due to dead or dying microfilariae and particularly involving a transient diarrhea, has been observed in clinical trials with ivermectin alone after treatment of some dogs that have circulating microfilariae.

Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children.

In case of ingestion by humans, clients should be advised to contact a physician immediately. Physicians may contact a Poison Control Center for advice concerning cases of ingestion by humans.

Store between 68°F - 77°F (20°C - 25°C). Excursions between 59°F - 86°F (15°C - 30°C) are permitted. Protect product from light.

ADVERSE REACTIONS: In clinical field trials with HEARTGARD Plus, vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of dosing was rarely observed (1.1% of administered doses). The following adverse reactions have been reported following the use of HEARTGARD: Depression/lethargy, vomiting, anorexia, diarrhea, mydriasis, ataxia, staggering, convulsions and hypersalivation.

SAFETY: HEARTGARD Plus has been shown to be bioequivalent to HEARTGARD, with respect to the bioavailability of ivermectin. The dose regimens of HEARTGARD Plus and HEARTGARD are the same with regard to ivermectin (6 mcg/kg). Studies with ivermectin indicate that certain dogs of the Collie breed are more sensitive to the effects of ivermectin administered at elevated dose levels (more than 16 times the target use level) than dogs of other breeds. At elevated doses, sensitive dogs showed adverse reactions which included mydriasis, depression, ataxia, tremors, drooling, paresis, recumbency, excitability, stupor, coma and death. HEARTGARD demonstrated no signs of toxicity at 10 times the recommended dose (60 mcg/kg) in sensitive Collies. Results of these trials and bioequivalency studies, support the safety of HEARTGARD products in dogs, including Collies, when used as recommended.

HEARTGARD Plus has shown a wide margin of safety at the recommended dose level in dogs, including pregnant or breeding bitches, stud dogs and puppies aged 6 or more weeks. In clinical trials, many commonly used flea collars, dips, shampoos, anthelmintics, antibiotics, vaccines and steroid preparations have been administered with HEARTGARD Plus in a heartworm disease prevention program.

In one trial, where some pups had parvovirus, there was a marginal reduction in efficacy against intestinal nematodes, possibly due to a change in intestinal transit time.

HOW SUPPLIED: HEARTGARD Plus is available in three dosage strengths (See DOSAGE section) for dogs of different weights. Each strength comes in convenient cartons of 6 and 12 chewables.

For customer service, please contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251.



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ASK SHAWN:

We're sick of chronic absenteeism



We are a small one-doctor practice in a rural area. We have a staff of about eight, and we have been struggling with chronic absenteeism with a part-time receptionist and a full-time technician. I've documented 10 sick days for the receptionist and nine for the technician over a relatively short time period. Do you have any suggestions about how to remedy this?—**Sick at heart**

Dear Sick at heart,

Manage them with the three-strike rule, and terminate them if they don't follow your attendance policy. Your documentation suggests you have no other course of action left. If you don't act, it

may send a bad message to your employees who are following your policy.

To make up for being short-staffed until you can find replacements, offer a bonus to your existing team members by splitting 0.4 percent of the missing staff person's wages. Team members will be happy that you acknowledged them and appreciated their efforts, and you may find that they don't want to replace the other employees. And when you do find the right replacements, your team members will understand and appreciate how valuable good team members are and how critical it is to keep communication open and morale up.

Good luck!

—**Shawn**



Check out Shawn's video answers at dvm360.com/mcvey.



Got a question? Ask Shawn.

Maybe you're tired of babysitting your team members. Perhaps you're looking for strategies to beat a bully. Shawn can help.

Shawn McVey, MA, MSW, is a member of the *Firstline* and *Veterinary Economics* Editorial Advisory boards and CEO of McVey Management Solutions in Austin, Texas.

Email your questions for him to firstline@advanstar.com, then visit dvm360.com/mcvey to read McVey's advice on other hot topics.



106 lbs.

Staying put



84 lbs.

Staying fit

Actual results based on **17 weeks** of feeding Rex Metabolic Advanced Weight Solution at Olde Naples Animal Wellness Center in Naples, FL

Weight management that works in the real world.

Rex's

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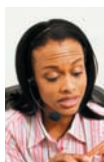


EXPECT SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Wellness plans: What's your role?

Some pet owners are still confused about health or wellness plans. Some believe it's a form of insurance or that it covers everything their pet needs while they're enrolled. The answer lies in good communication.

By Kelly Searles



>>Receptionist:

Offer pet owners a detailed handout that explains the health plans you offer so they can review it while they're waiting to see the doctor.

Explain that it's a way to spread the cost of wellness services out over the course of a year. You may also help interested pet owners enroll at the end of the visit. When clients enroll, print and email the details of the specific health plan they signed up for and walk them through the services their plan covers.



>>Technicians and assistants:

Ask clients what questions they have about the health plans the receptionist introduced. Based on the pet, the client and their needs, you can make a recommendation about which health plan is best suited for the pet and client.



>>Practice manager:

Identify your goals. If your goal is to increase dentistry, create plans that include a dental cleaning in addition to the annual wellness services.



>>Veterinarian:

Use plans as a payment option for the services you're already recommending. During wellness appointments offer the option of enrolling in a plan that includes the care you've recommended for the pet.

Rate your success. My practice wanted to increase dental care, so we promoted a plan with dental cleaning. Our dentistry numbers are up 12 percent in the last year, and almost 15 percents of our active client base is enrolled in a health plan.

Kelly Searles is the practice manager at Bigger Road Veterinary Clinic in Kettering, Ohio.

A solution to a STICKY PROBLEM

Our doctor doesn't like to use a lot of glue when closing incisions. If she does use some, it's only a small drop. We've found a great way to use very small quantities of glue on the very end of an incision. We get very fine cheap needles and attach them to the end of the bottle to limit the amount that's dispensed.

—Sara Hall

Veterinary assistant

Lakewood Veterinary Clinic

Lake Odessa, Michigan



Get happy @ work

Kitten love

One of our technicians saved a kitten last fall that was abandoned by its mother. Guess what the clinic has now? You got it, a clinic cat named Tator. Being able to take a two-minute break to go play with a kitten—how much better could life be? Try to be unhappy around a kitten—it just doesn't work.

—Kelly Phillips

Receptionist

Medford Veterinary Clinic

Medford, Wisconsin



Get moving

Exercise is a great motivational way to keep yourself going and a great stress reliever. If I can work out for a half an hour over my lunch break, I feel so much better. I also get more energy to keep the day going—and for my two children when I get home. Whether I run three miles or do an exercise video, I feel great and it's my perfect balance to keep me going everyday.

—Melissa Wiitala

Technician

Medford Veterinary Clinic

Medford, Wisconsin

Get happy in 2015!

dvm360 brings you the tools, tips and tricks you need to expand your emotional intelligence and avoid burnout in this new, improved and highly interactive dvm360 app issue. For more details, head over to

dvm360.com/ipadapp.



Tastes like



Works like



Metabolic

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therapeutic nutrition
like this.**

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- ✓ Full strength, clinically proven efficacy

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TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE™**

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dvm360[®] leadership CHALLENGE TEAM PAY

On deck in your favorite veterinary publications



**The team
pay report.** A
comprehensive

overview of the veterinary team
community, as measured by the
2014 and 2015 *Firstline* Career Path
Study. Plus, tips on how to pay team
members more—and why some
may be leaving the profession.

Veterinary economics

**Up with revenue = up with team
pay.** Dr. Ernie Ward and other
experts uncover the biggest non-
secret around: If you want to pay
team members more money, you
need to earn more money.

Veterinary medicine

Specialized technicians:

Encouraging technicians to become
certified in one of the 11 currently
approved technician specialties
is one way for practices to boost
revenue and raise pay. *Veterinary
Medicine* delves into the details of
these specialties.

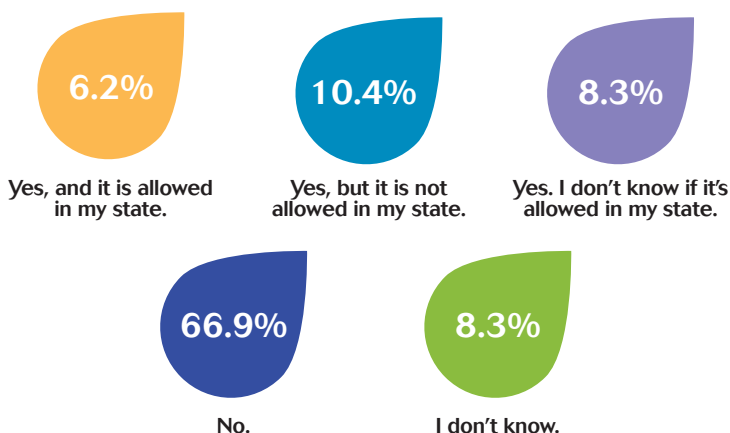
A new way to look at pay

Do you know what factors influence your
pay? And would you be willing to work
someplace else if you could earn more?

Where you work—and what you do there—influences what you
make. For years, we've looked at regional data to bring clarity to
what team members are earning in practice. But as practices
continue to grow and expand their services, team members have the
option of working in a larger variety of practices and performing a wide
variety of tasks that have the potential to increase their pay—including
pursuing practice ownership in some states. Check out the data on the
following pages:



Team members: Are you interested in practice ownership?



Numbers may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

smart is...

BROAD COVERAGE IN A SOFT CHEWABLE

Protection against six parasites instead of only three.

**sentinel[®]
spectrum[®]**
(milbemycin oxime • lufenuron • praziquantel)



HEARTWORMS



ROUNDWORMS



HOOKWORMS*

+



WHIPWORMS



FLEAS**



TAPEWORMS

**Heartgard[®]
Plus**
(ivermectin/pyrantel)



HEARTWORMS



ROUNDWORMS



HOOKWORMS



TO ORDER, CALL YOUR DISTRIBUTOR REPRESENTATIVE OR CALL YOUR VIRBAC REPRESENTATIVE AT 1-844-4-VIRBAC (1-844-484-7222).

Dogs should be tested for heartworm prior to use. Mild hypersensitivity reactions have been noted in some dogs carrying a high number of circulating microfilariae. Treatment with fewer than 6 monthly doses after the last exposure to mosquitoes may not provide complete heartworm protection. Please see full product label for more information or visit www.virbacvet.com.
See brief summary on page 09

*A. caninum.

**Prevents flea eggs from hatching; is not an adulticide.



50%

Team members say they got a raise last year.

Expect to get a raise this year as well.

50%



Team pay by practice type

General practice, 1 doctor

\$14.18

Receptionist

\$14.18

Veterinary assistant

\$16.63

Credentialed technician

\$16.03

Practice manager

General practice, 2 to 3 doctors

\$14.22

Receptionist

\$13.52

Veterinary assistant

\$17.10

Credentialed technician

\$18.71

Practice manager

General practice, 4 or more doctors

\$15.64

Receptionist

\$13.61

Veterinary assistant

\$17.13

Credentialed technician

\$21.42

Practice manager

Specialty practice

\$15.35

Receptionist

\$16.12

Veterinary assistant

\$18.67

Credentialed technician

\$22.81

Practice manager

TIME TO GROW

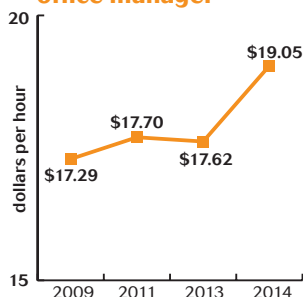
About 87 percent of team members say they're willing to take on more responsibility at their practice to earn more. So where can you start? With the right training, of course! Want to help pets manage their pain? Read more about Certified Veterinary Pain Practitioner credentialing on page 10. Or check out options for team members interested in pursuing a career in management on page 13. And for more career paths for team members, visit dvm360.com/teampay for a list of resources and career opportunities.

Sources: 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2015 *Firstline* Career Path Study

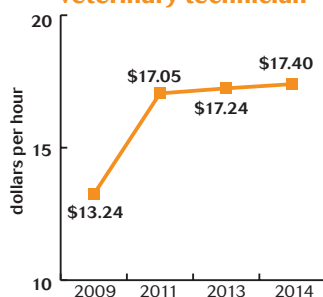


What's your hourly wage?

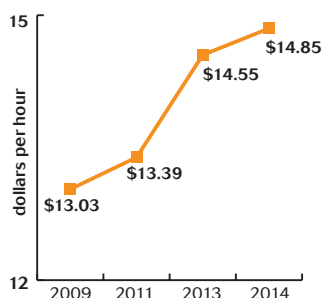
Practice manager/ office manager



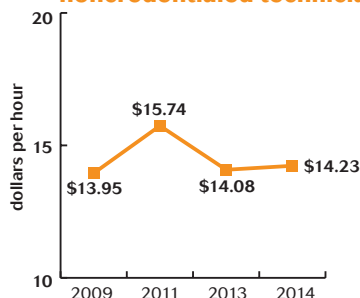
Credentialed veterinary technician



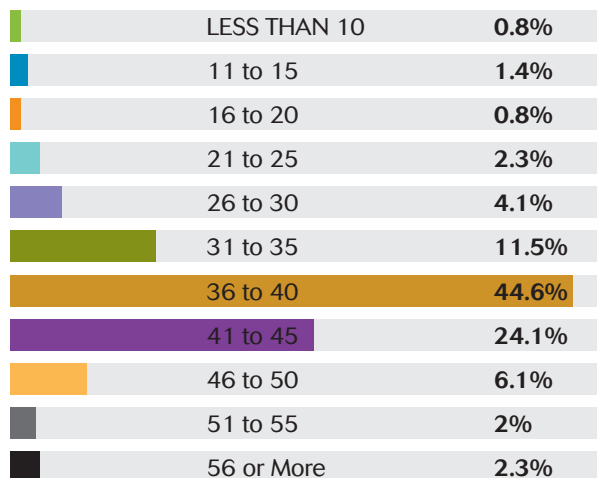
Receptionist



Veterinary assistant/ noncredentialed technician



How many hours do you work each week?



sentinel[®]
spectrum[®]
(milbemycin oxime-lufenuron-praziquantel)

Caution

Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

Indications

SENTINEL[®] SPECTRUM[®] (milbemycin oxime/lufenuron/praziquantel) is indicated for the prevention of heartworm disease caused by *Dirofilaria immitis*; for the prevention and control of flea populations (*Ctenocephalides felis*); and for the treatment and control of adult roundworm (*Toxocara canis*, *Toxascaris leonina*), adult hookworm (*Ancylostoma caninum*), adult whipworm (*Trichuris vulpis*), and adult tapeworm (*Taenia pisiformis*, *Echinococcus multilocularis* and *Echinococcus granulosus*) infections in dogs and puppies two pounds of body weight or greater and six weeks of age and older.

Dosage and Administration

SENTINEL SPECTRUM should be administered orally, once every month, at the minimum dosage of 0.23 mg/lb (0.5 mg/kg) milbemycin oxime, 4.55 mg/lb (10 mg/kg) lufenuron, and 2.28 mg/lb (5 mg/kg) praziquantel. For heartworm prevention, give once monthly for at least 6 months after exposure to mosquitoes.

Dosage Schedule

Body Weight	Milbemycin Oxime per chewable	Lufenuron per chewable	Praziquantel per chewable	Number of chewables
2 to 8 lbs.	2.3 mg	46 mg	22.8 mg	One
8.1 to 25 lbs.	5.75 mg	115 mg	57 mg	One
25.1 to 50 lbs.	11.5 mg	230 mg	114 mg	One
50.1 to 100 lbs.	23.0 mg	460 mg	228 mg	One
Over 100 lbs.	Administer the appropriate combination of chewables			

To ensure adequate absorption, always administer SENTINEL SPECTRUM to dogs immediately after or in conjunction with a normal meal.

SENTINEL SPECTRUM may be offered to the dog by hand or added to a small amount of dog food. The chewables should be administered in a manner that encourages the dog to chew, rather than to swallow without chewing. Chewables may be broken into pieces and fed to dogs that normally swallow treats whole. Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed a few minutes after administration to ensure that no part of the dose is lost or rejected. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost, redosing is recommended.

Contraindications

There are no known contraindications to the use of SENTINEL SPECTRUM.

Warnings

Not for use in humans. Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children.

Precautions

Treatment with fewer than 6 monthly doses after the last exposure to mosquitoes may not provide complete heartworm prevention. Prior to administration of SENTINEL SPECTRUM, dogs should be tested for existing heartworm infections. At the discretion of the veterinarian, infected dogs should be treated to remove adult heartworms. SENTINEL SPECTRUM is not effective against adult *D. immitis*.

Mild, transient hypersensitivity reactions, such as labored breathing, vomiting, hypersalivation, and lethargy, have been noted in some dogs treated with milbemycin oxime carrying a high number of circulating microfilariae. These reactions are presumably caused by release of protein from dead or dying microfilariae.

Do not use in puppies less than six weeks of age.

Do not use in dogs or puppies less than two pounds of body weight.

The safety of SENTINEL SPECTRUM has not been evaluated in dogs used for breeding or in lactating females. Studies have been performed with milbemycin oxime and lufenuron alone.

Adverse Reactions

The following adverse reactions have been reported in dogs after administration of milbemycin oxime, lufenuron, or praziquantel: vomiting, depression/lethargy, pruritus, urticaria, diarrhea, anorexia, skin congestion, ataxia, convulsions, salivation, and weakness.

To report suspected adverse drug events, contact Novartis Animal Health at 800-637-0281 or the FDA at 1-888-FDA-VETS.

Manufactured for: Novartis Animal Health US, Inc.
Greensboro, NC 27408, USA

NADA #141-333, Approved by FDA

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NAH/SSC/BS/1

1/14

A PAINLESS career choice

Obtaining certification as a Certified Veterinary Pain Practitioner will not only help you provide the next level of care to patients—it may also help you reach a new level of personal and professional growth. *By Tasha McNerney, BS, CVT*

Hey you. Yes, you! Are you a technician? Are you feeling stuck in a career rut? Do you ever wonder about other opportunities for technicians? Of course you do—because technicians are educated, dedicated and compassionate people who always strive to give the best to their patients.

Gone are the days of the technician simply holding an animal or preparing vaccines. Now technicians are using their superpowers to further their education and become dynamic participants in the field of veterinary medicine to offer high-quality patient care.

The painful truth

Today technicians can pursue further training and specialization in many avenues, including dentistry, anesthesia, internal medicine and emergency and critical care—and also in the field of pain management.

Technicians and veterinarians involved in pain management help strengthen the practice's bond with animals and with cli-

ents. As pain management has become an important specialty area in human medicine, it's led to a greater awareness of pain in animals. Pet parents want the best for their furry family members, and that includes top-of-the-line pain management.

In veterinary medicine we now know that pain is best managed through an interdisciplinary approach, and we can best achieve effective pain management through cooperation, sharing knowledge and the collective wisdom of veterinary professionals from many disciplines.

Certification deciphered

The International Veterinary Academy of Pain Management's program grants the title of Certified Veterinary



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Considering a specialty?

Check out the February *Veterinary Medicine* cover story "What Specialized Technicians Bring to the Table" for a closer look at the 11 technician specialties at dvm360.com/techspecialties.




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Choose your career path

Looking for new avenues for your career? Check out our new series “Coffee on the Couch.” Tasha McNerney interviews technicians who’ve boosted their careers to the next level to discover the recipe for a lasting career in veterinary medicine at dvm360.com/CoffeeTalk. In the first episode Tasha talks with Mary Berg, BS, LATg, RVT, VTS (dentistry), about career paths in dentistry.



Pain Practitioner (CVPP) for veterinarians and licensed technicians or Certified Animal Pain Practitioner (CAPP) for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants with certification in canine rehabilitation for candidates who complete the program and pass a certification test. The certification program emphasizes the value of the many disciplines capable of enhancing patient comfort and quality of life and educates about a variety of modalities. These areas include:

- > Analgesic drug therapies
- > Analgesic adjunct therapies
- > Physical rehabilitation methods
- > Complimentary alternative therapies, such as acupuncture and massage

By using a multimodal approach the CVPP can use analgesic drug therapies along with physical therapy techniques such as massage, hydrotherapy and acupuncture to create a multidimensional pain management plan.

Put your certification to work

After obtaining a CVPP, the technician can work with pet owners and veterinarians to provide the best pain management plans for patient in these ways:

- 1. Assess the patient's current status** and pain management regime and—together with the owner and veterinarian—create a pain management plan specific to that patient for the best overall outcome.
- 2. Assist in the acute pain management setting** helping clinics to create protocols under a veterinarian's guidance for postoperative pain scoring and proper analgesic techniques for acute surgical pain.
- 3. Act as a point person** the pet

owner can contact and relay information to about the pet's progress. The CVPP can then take this information and work with the veterinarian to make changes to the analgesic plan as necessary to ensure the best outcome for that patient.

By obtaining your CVPP you can also help in the continuing education of your clients and team members. Many veterinary professionals who have obtained the CVPP designation go on to write magazine articles, teach online courses and lead seminars on various pain management topics.

There are so many opportunities for the veterinary technicians when it comes to pain management. Technicians can further their education and become certified in acupuncture, massage therapy, reiki and various other pain management modalities.

By reaching the goals associated with CVPP certification, veterinary technicians can increase their patients' safety and comfort, increase the overall morale at your practice, educate pet owners on the importance of proper pain management and increase client compliance in this area.

Now, it's not all sunshine and puppy kisses. Obtaining your CVPP will require a big time commitment. And you need to be at a practice that supports technicians being an active part of the medical process. But if you do jump through the hoops, your patients will have more comfortable recoveries from surgery and older animals will cope with chronic pain better because of your efforts. **FL**

Tasha McNerney, BS, CVT, is a member of the IVAPM, and she is currently pursuing her CVPP. She works as a technician at Rau Animal Hospital in Glenside, Pennsylvania.

Step up into MANAGEMENT



Find out what it takes—and how to get there—with these tips and a quick quiz to see if you're ready to be a practice manager. *By Christine Shupe, CAE*

Do you have what it takes to be a practice manager? Wait, wait ... don't answer yet. First let's discuss what it means to be a practice manager.

Practice management includes responsibilities in almost every area of practice operation, it doesn't look exactly the same in every practice and practice managers don't all follow the same path to their positions. Well beyond providing high-quality care to animals, practice management focuses on business operations, employing sound management principles and standards so the business can serve its mission and provide a profitable return to the practice owner. A practice manager is a member of a team, working hand-in-hand with the practice owner to bring the owner's vision to fruition.

So what does the typical practice manager's job descrip-

tion look like? The practice manager's realm of responsibility may include accountability for staffing, marketing, finances, risk management and equipment and facility management. A practice manager is more than a jack of all trades—he or she is a master of all trades. The tasks the manager performs—as well as the skills and knowledge required to accomplish these duties—are extensive. What many practice managers love about their job is that the responsibilities are multifaceted, and each day can be very different.

1 Human resources

As the human resources guru, the manager plans, directs and coordinates the organization's human resource management activities, including recruiting and hiring team members, managing employee benefits, providing guidance and direction to subordinates,

training the team, scheduling, setting performance standards and monitoring performance.

2 Law and ethics

In the role of legal eagle, the manager addresses issues related to compliance with legal and statutory requirements, as well as ethical mandates for veterinary professionals.

3 Marketing

Marketing responsibilities require managers to develop internal and external marketing plans and materials and monitor the outcomes of these efforts. To promote client relations, the manager establishes protocols for client communication and oversees client services.

4 Practice organization

Practice organizational responsibilities include maintaining

What kind of manager are you?

Check out job descriptions for office manager, practice manager and hospital administrator from the VHMA at dvm360.com/managercareer to plan your next steps to grow your career.



NexGard® (afoxolaner) Chewables

CAUTION: Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

Description:

NEXGARD® (afoxolaner) is available in four sizes of beef-flavored, soft chewables for oral administration to dogs and puppies according to their weight. Each chewable is formulated to provide a minimum afoxolaner dosage of 1.14 mg/lb (2.5 mg/kg). Afoxolaner has the chemical composition 1-Naphthalenecarboxamide, 4-[5-[3-chloro-5-(trifluoromethyl)-phenyl]-4,5-dihydro-5-(trifluoromethyl)-3-isoxazoly]-N-[2-oxo-2-[(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)amino]ethyl].

Indications:

NEXGARD kills adult fleas and is indicated for the treatment and prevention of flea infestations (*Ctenocephalides felis*) and the treatment and control of Black-legged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*), American Dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*), and Lone Star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*) infestations in dogs and puppies 8 weeks of age and older, weighing 4 pounds of body weight or greater, for one month.

Dosage and Administration:

NEXGARD is given orally once a month, at the minimum dosage of 1.14 mg/lb (2.5 mg/kg).

Dosing Schedule:

Body Weight	Afoxolaner Per Chewable (mg)	Chewables Administered
4.0 to 10.0 lbs.	11.3	One
10.1 to 24.0 lbs.	28.3	One
24.1 to 60.0 lbs.	68	One
60.1 to 121.0 lbs.	136	One
Over 121.0 lbs.	Administer the appropriate combination of chewables	

NEXGARD can be administered with or without food. Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed for a few minutes to ensure that part of the dose is not lost or refused. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost or if vomiting occurs within two hours of administration, redose with another full dose. If a dose is missed, administer NEXGARD and resume a monthly dosing schedule.

Flea Treatment and Prevention:

Treatment with NEXGARD may begin at any time of the year. In areas where fleas are common year-round, monthly treatment with NEXGARD should continue the entire year without interruption.

To minimize the likelihood of flea reinfestation, it is important to treat all animals within a household with an approved flea control product.

Tick Treatment and Control:

Treatment with NEXGARD may begin at any time of the year (see Effectiveness).

Contraindications:

There are no known contraindications for the use of NEXGARD.

Warnings:

Not for use in humans. Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children. In case of accidental ingestion, contact a physician immediately.

Precautions:

The safe use of NEXGARD in breeding, pregnant or lactating dogs has not been evaluated. Use with caution in dogs with a history of seizures (see Adverse Reactions).

Adverse Reactions:

In a well-controlled US field study, which included a total of 333 households and 615 treated dogs (415 administered afoxolaner; 200 administered active control), no serious adverse reactions were observed with NEXGARD. Over the 90-day study period, all observations of potential adverse reactions were recorded. The most frequent reactions reported at an incidence of > 1% within any of the three months of observations are presented in the following table. The most frequently reported adverse reaction was vomiting. The occurrence of vomiting was generally self-limiting and of short duration and tended to decrease with subsequent doses in both groups. Five treated dogs experienced anorexia during the study, and two of those dogs experienced anorexia with the first dose but not subsequent doses.

Table 1: Dogs With Adverse Reactions.

	Treatment Group			
	Afoxolaner		Oral active control	
	N ¹	% (n=415)	N ²	% (n=200)
Vomiting (with and without blood)	17	4.1	25	12.5
Dry/Flaky Skin	13	3.1	2	1.0
Diarrhea (with and without blood)	13	3.1	7	3.5
Lethargy	7	1.7	4	2.0
Anorexia	5	1.2	9	4.5

¹Number of dogs in the afoxolaner treatment group with the identified abnormality.

²Number of dogs in the control group with the identified abnormality.

In the US field study, one dog with a history of seizures experienced a seizure on the same day after receiving the first dose and on the same day after receiving the second dose of NEXGARD. This dog experienced a third seizure one week after receiving the third dose. The dog remained enrolled and completed the study. Another dog with a history of seizures had a seizure 18 days after the first dose of NEXGARD. The dog remained enrolled and completed the study. A third dog with a history of seizures received NEXGARD and experienced no seizures throughout the study.

To report suspected adverse events, for technical assistance or to obtain a copy of the MSDS, contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251 or www.merial.com/nexgard. For additional information about adverse drug experience reporting for animal drugs, contact FDA at 1-888-FDA-VETS or online at <http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/SafetyHealth>.

Mode of Action:

Afoxolaner is a member of the isoxazoline family, shown to bind at a binding site to inhibit insect and acarine ligand-gated chloride channels, in particular those gated by the neurotransmitter gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), thereby blocking pre- and post-synaptic transfer of chloride ions across cell membranes. Prolonged afoxolaner-induced hyperexcitation results in uncontrolled activity of the central nervous system and death of insects and acarines. The selective toxicity of afoxolaner between insects and acarines and mammals may be inferred by the differential sensitivity of the insects and acarines' GABA receptors versus mammalian GABA receptors.

Effectiveness:

In a well-controlled laboratory study, NEXGARD began to kill fleas four hours after initial administration and demonstrated >99% effectiveness at eight hours. In a separate well-controlled laboratory study, NEXGARD demonstrated 100% effectiveness against fleas on the Day 30, 60 and 90 visits compared with baseline was 98.0%, 99.7%, and 99.9%, respectively. Through Day 21, and on Day 35, On Day 28, NEXGARD was 81.1% effective 12 hours post-infestation. Dogs in both the treated and control groups that were infested with fleas on Day -1 generated flea eggs at 12- and 24-hours post-treatment (0-11 eggs and 1-17 eggs in the NEXGARD treated dogs, and 4-90 eggs and 0-118 eggs in the control dogs, at 12- and 24-hours, respectively). At subsequent evaluations post-infestation, fleas from dogs in the treated group were essentially unable to produce any eggs (0-1 eggs) while fleas from dogs in the control group continued to produce eggs (1-141 eggs).

In a 90-day US field study conducted in households with existing flea infestations of varying severity, the effectiveness of NEXGARD against fleas on the Day 30, 60 and 90 visits compared with baseline was 98.0%, 99.7%, and 99.9%, respectively. Collectively, the data from the three studies (two laboratory and one field) demonstrate that NEXGARD kills fleas before they can lay eggs, thus preventing subsequent flea infestations after the start of treatment of existing flea infestations.

In well-controlled laboratory studies, NEXGARD demonstrated >94% effectiveness against *Dermacentor variabilis* and *Ixodes scapularis*, 48 hours post-infestation, and against *Amblyomma americanum* 72 hours post-infestation, for 30 days.

Animal Safety:

In a margin of safety study, NEXGARD was administered orally to 8- to 9-week-old Beagle puppies at 1, 3, and 5 times the maximum exposure dose (6.3 mg/kg) for three treatments every 28 days, followed by three treatments every 14 days, for a total of six treatments. Dogs in the control group were sham-dosed. There were no clinically-relevant effects related to treatment on physical examination, body weight, food consumption, clinical pathology (hematology, clinical chemistry, or coagulation tests), gross pathology, histopathology or organ weights. Vomiting occurred throughout the study, with a similar incidence in the treated and control groups, including one dog in the 5x group that vomited four hours after treatment.

In a well-controlled field study, NEXGARD was used concomitantly with other medications, such as vaccines, anthelmintics, antibiotics (including topicals), steroids, NSAIDs, anesthetics, and antihistamines. No adverse reactions were observed from the concomitant use of NEXGARD with other medications.

Storage Information:

Store at or below 30°C (86°F) with excursions permitted up to 40°C (104°F).

How Supplied:

NEXGARD is available in four sizes of beef-flavored soft chewables: 11.3, 28.3, 68 or 136 mg afoxolaner. Each chewable size is available in color-coded packages of 1, 3 or 6 beef-flavored chewables.

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PROFESSIONAL growth

inventory and medical records systems, establishing protocols for hospital policies and procedures and coordinating equipment acquisition and maintenance. The manager also establishes data monitoring systems related to veterinary practice, such as controlled drugs, radiography exposure and laboratory and surgical procedures.

5 Finance

On the financial side, the manager oversees banking procedures, establishes client credit policies, conducts fee analyses and manages payroll. In consultation with the practice owner, the manager also monitors financial trends and projections and prepares budgets.

Becoming a hospital manager

You can pursue a career as a practice manager from several directions. One approach is to land a position in a practice as an office manager or another management type of position that will be a stepping stone to a higher level management position. Working as a receptionist or a technician teaches hands-on experience in a practice, which provides a basic understanding of a practice manager's responsibilities. Office managers also learn basic management skills applicable to practice management.

Once you determine you're ready to move to the next level, it's imperative to take a personal inventory of your skills, accomplishments and career goals and schedule time with the owner to evaluate your performance and identify areas of improvement. This is also the time to share your inventory and discuss career aspirations. The goal of the meeting is to enlist the owner's support as you prepare to take on your next professional challenge.

Another strategy for entering the field of practice management is to take classes at one of the growing number of schools that offer training in veterinary practice management. These schools offer courses such as business management, veterinary law, accounting and veterinary hospital supervision. The more managerial skills you possess, the more responsibility you can assume. Check out the self quiz on page 16.



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SELF-TEST

13 steps to your management path

In addition to the specific jobs that managers assume under the five areas of responsibility, there are personal skills, qualities and preferences that managers should either be comfortable with or be interested in refining. Ask yourself these questions.

1 Are you a decider? Practice managers must gather and analyze relevant data on different issues to make informed decisions that yield the best solutions.

2 Are you honest and principled? Practice managers must act with integrity and uphold high standards of ethical conduct. A significant part of the job involves ensuring compliance with laws, handling confidential information and maintaining financial accounts.

3 Does your head rule? Strategic thinking and planning are essential to financial forecasting, marketing planning and long-term planning for practice growth. Managers must identify relevant questions, problems and arguments and offer logical and well-reasoned solutions.

4 Are you a planner? Practice managers must demonstrate a penchant for organization, efficiency, prioritizing and planning.

5 Do you believe good communication is a two-way street? The ability to express your thoughts clearly and understandably and the ability to actively listen are essential to communicate effectively with clients and coworkers.

6 Do you have the write stuff? Managers are responsible for writing and updating protocols, manuals and handbooks, and they must also understand complex technical information related to different aspects of their job.

7 Are you willing to analyze that? Many financial, personnel and marketing responsibilities require quantitative reasoning and analytical skills. Managers must grasp complex information and make correct inferences.

8 Do rules rule? Compliance with federal, state and professional regulations require managers to be detail-oriented and to respect organizational rules and policies.

9 Are you an outside-the-box thinker? The multi-faceted nature of the job requires practice managers apply resourcefulness, creativity and initiative to their responsibilities.

10 Do you love to learn? The veterinary field is constantly evolving. Managers must keep up with these changes and actively seek out new information, technologies and learning opportunities.

11 Can you bounce? Veterinary hospitals can be stressful workplaces, and practice managers must cope effectively with pressure and setbacks. Effective managers handle crisis situations effectively and maintain their composure under stress.

12 Can you roll? Because practices can be characterized by a fair amount of uncertainty and unpredictability, the ability to adapt work behavior in response to changing conditions or new information is critical.

13 Can you lead the pack? Effective managers influence and motivate others at work. They take initiative in organizing and coordinating team members and activities.

How did you do? If the areas of responsibility, knowledge and skills support your interests and skills, it's time to consider the next steps to climb into a management position. **FL**



Christine Shupe, CAE, is the executive director of the Veterinary Hospital Managers Association. The association is dedicated to serving professionals in veterinary management through education, certification and networking.

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How to leave your job (the right way)

When it's time to move on to a different job or another practice, it's important to leave the right way. Use these tips to say goodbye on good terms. *By Kelley Ferguson-Greene*

Leaving your job is rarely a simple decision. Whether you're facing a better offer or exiting a nightmare, your next consideration should be how to engineer a graceful exit.

Our veterinary community

can be a small and close knit—perhaps even dysfunctional—family. Regardless of your reasons for moving forward in your career, keeping all your bridges intact may be one of the most important consid-

erations for your future—in both the long and short term. Maintaining your integrity will eventually increase your value, especially in cases where positions are subject to change. Remember, you may run into

colleagues on another level at some point. I once met a technician whose boss had previously been a kennel assistant under her at another practice in another state. Adhere to the simple rule of equal respect for all team members in any practice. Then consider these dos and don'ts to make a graceful exit from your practice:

> Do give appropriate notice. Some offices will define appropriate when you're hired, so start by following those guidelines. If your exit is amiable, consider the amount of time necessary to fill your position, as well as the position you're moving to and their needs. As a general rule, your new practice should honor your notice to your old practice as a symbol of your integrity.



may feel threatened by employees working after giving notice. They may terminate you on the spot. Make sure you're financially covered for the transition into your next job.

> Do give your notice to the appropriate party. No one in your office should know of your plans to exit until your supervisor does. Your efforts to

avoid office gossip or animosity maintain a high level of professionalism. You and your supervisor will decide together how to announce your departure.



> Do give notice at the end of the business day.

This allows your supervisor appropriate time to digest the information and move forward.



> Don't be negative.

Approach your departure as an opportunity for your personal growth. Hopefully, your current employer will be sorry to lose you but happy to wish you well. If there are negative circumstances behind your departure, try to reserve those for discussion in a diplomatic fashion and perhaps suggest an exit interview at the end of your notice.

> Do give notice in person. Also provide a written letter at that time with an exit date clearly defined in writing. Again, this notice shouldn't contain negatives. Keep those thoughts reserved for an exit interview if you're offered one. Use this piece of correspondence to express gratitude for all your employer has done for you during your employment.

> Do offer your help. If you know of appropriate candidates to fill your position, suggest them and offer to assist in training them to fill your role in the practice. You want your employer to see you as an ally in your exit, not an enemy. Your boss will likely welcome efforts to facilitate a smooth departure.



> Do be prepared for a counter offer.

If your reasons for departure are financial, your employer may try to entice you to remain. Predetermine parameters—if there are any—that might change your mind. This is another reason to avoid negatives and make sure your supervisor is the first to know.

Sadly, not every departure is smooth or on good terms. In the end, you can only be accountable for your behavior. Act in a fashion you can be proud of, regardless of how others may respond. In a perfect world, you will enjoy a lovely parting event hosted by your employer and greet each other with hugs at CE events in the future. Congratulations! The future looks bright. **FL**

Kelley Ferguson-Greene is a practice manager at Countryside Animal Hospital in Alachua, Florida.

Find it all here
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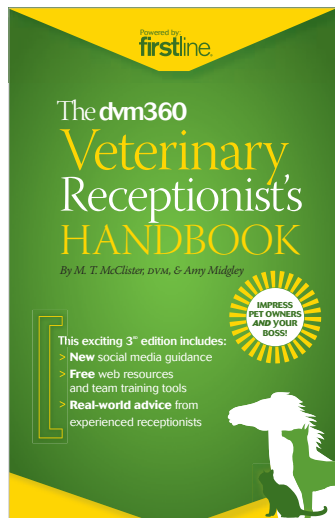
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