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New cat products approved

It seems like most of the products on the veterinary market are geared for dogs, but a couple of great products have recently been approved for use in cats. One



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is a flea-control product called Comfortis. The other is a pain reliever called Onsior. Numerous flea-control products are available and some of the spot-on prescription-only veterinary products are now available in over-the-counter generic forms. Current oral products are Program, which keeps fleas from reproducing and kills immature stages but not adult fleas, and Capstar, which kills fleas within 30 minutes but lasts for only 24 hours. What is great news for cats is that there is now an oral product available that kills fleas for a month.

Comfortis is made by Elanco Animal Health, and it contains the active ingredient spinosad. This product has been available for dogs for several years and was used off-label for cats. Now the packaging and labeling are FDA-approved for cats and kittens over 2 pounds and 14 weeks of age. Benefits of Comfortis, compared with spot-on flea control products, are that it starts killing adult fleas within 30 minutes (which is before they have a chance to lay eggs), and it cannot be washed or rubbed off. Side effects are rare but could include vomiting, lethargy, decreased appetite and diarrhea. We have not seen any of these side effects with our patients.

There are cats that have a reaction to spot-on, topical flea products, so Comfortis offers a great alternative. Overall, most spot-on products are extremely safe, effective and easy to use, but Comfortis offers an alternative for cats and owners preferring another mode of treatment.

There are limited options for pain relief in cats, but newly approved Onsior provides three days of anti-inflammatory treatment. Onsior contains robenacoxib, which is a type of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). It has been studied and approved for short-term postoperative pain relief.

Onsior comes as tablets that are given once daily. Many veterinarians are using it for other causes of pain in addition to postoperative pain. Care must be used with cats that have kidney disease since NSAID's can affect renal function. Just like in humans, NSAID's can cause stomach irritation too.

We have been using Onsior successfully at our practice, and the drug can be safely used with narcotic pain relievers when intensive pain relief is needed.

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