



Prescription misuse and abuse can occur in both human medicine and animal medicine and all practitioners should be aware of how to identify such occurrences and know resources available to take action. The typical medications sought from a veterinary practice by someone with the intention of becoming involved in illegal pharmaceutical diversion include:

- narcotic analgesics (pain relief for the pet);
- anxiolytics (relief from anxiety for the pet);
- anabolic steroids (client/employees stealing the medications directly from the practice);
- stimulants (treatment of pet's obesity).

**If You Suspect Prescription Misuse or Abuse, Contact the Vermont State Police Drug Diversion Unit (DDU):**

**1-802-241-5360**

The DDU investigates crimes relating to prescription drug misuse and abuse. Investigators in the DDU are assigned to cases across the state of Vermont; the DDU works with local, county and federal law enforcement agencies. Prescribers may share information communicated to them by a patient if they believe there is an effort to unlawfully obtain a regulated medication.

*Title 18 VSA 4223. Fraud or deceit: Information communicated to a physician in an effort unlawfully to procure a regulated drug or unlawfully to procure the administration of any such drug shall not be deemed a privileged communication.*

Guidelines of what may be classified as a Drug Diversion Crime:

- Prescription must be your own - cannot possess or sell another's prescription;
- Consumption of prescription medication that is not your own;
- Prescription is not properly dispensed by a licensed professional;
- Prescription is not kept in a lawful container;
- Prescription obtained by fraud, deceit or trickery;
- Prescription is forged, false or altered;
- Prescription is obtained by concealing material facts of physical condition or treatment;
- False name or address provided to prescriber;
- Misrepresent or use of false title;
- False or forged label on prescription;
- Patient failing to disclose treatment & prescriptions provided by any other physician for the same condition.



### **The Drug Enforcement Administration's Office of Diversion Control: Valid Prescription Requirements**

A prescription for a controlled substance must be dated and signed on the date when issued. The DEA's valid prescription and *Title 18 VSA 4212. Labels* requirements indicate physicians, dentists, or veterinarians dispensing regulated drugs shall affix to the container a label showing the:

1. The full name and address of the patient, **or if the patient is an animal, the name and address of the owner of the animal and the species of the animal;**
2. The dispensing practitioner's full name and address;
3. Medication name;
4. Medication strength;
5. Dosage form;
6. Quantity prescribed (*see no. 2 in the following Safeguard Section*);
7. Directions for use;
8. Date of issuance of the prescription and dispensing of the medication;
9. Number of refills (if any) authorized.

A prescription for a controlled substance must be written in ink or indelible pencil or typewritten and must be manually signed by the practitioner on the date when issued.

### **The Drug Enforcement Administration's Office of Diversion Control Recommends the Following Safeguards for Prescribers:**

1. Keep all prescription blanks in a safe place where they cannot be stolen; minimize the number of prescription pads in use.
2. Write out the actual amount prescribed in addition to giving a number to discourage alterations of the prescription order.
3. Use prescription blanks only for writing a prescription order and not for notes.
4. Never sign prescription blanks in advance.
5. Assist the pharmacist when they telephone to verify information about a prescription order; a corresponding responsibility rests with the pharmacist that dispenses the prescription.
6. Contact the nearest DEA field office to obtain or furnish information regarding prescription activities.
7. Use tamper-resistant prescription pads.

### **The Drug Enforcement Administration's Office of Diversion Control: Disposal of Controlled Substances**

A practitioner may dispose of out-of-date, damaged, or otherwise unusable/unwanted controlled substances, including samples, by transferring them to a registrant (referred to as "Reverse Distributors") who is authorized to receive such materials. The practitioner may contact the local DEA field office for a list of authorized Reverse Distributors. Schedule I and II controlled substances should be transferred via the DEA Form 222, while Schedule III–V compounds may be transferred via invoice. The practitioner should maintain copies of the records documenting the transfer and disposal of controlled substances for a period of 2 years.

**Patients and clients may dial Vermont 2-1-1 or visit [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov) to obtain information regarding where to turn in unused or expired medications for safe disposal at sites around Vermont.**