



## Setting the Standards of Practice Style: Drafting the Dress Code



A veterinary practice should always be aware of its image, inside and out. The condition of the building is an important marketing opportunity; however, *inside* the practice is an even stronger marketing tool—every team member is a walking billboard that conveys the practice's image and makes a statement to the clients about the style of the practice.

Is there only one correct style?

Consider the regional and cultural image of the city or town. A practice in a ritzy or high-end part of town should probably fit that image, outfitting its team members with sharp-looking, matching uniforms and following strict grooming standards. In another part of town populated by young, progressive individuals, tattoos and piercings may be considered hip and acceptable. In a rural practice, a more

natural look may be appropriate, allowing the team to wear denim and adhere to less stringent standards.

So, no—one size does *not* fit all when it comes to practice style. Each practice needs to know what its clientele expects and appreciates and adopt a dress code accordingly. Every practice handbook or policy manual should include a dress code that covers these 3 topics:

- **Uniform Appearance**

Every team member should be educated about the necessity of displaying a professional appearance that fits with the practice culture, ensures that clients and business colleagues are favorably impressed, and enhances the reputation of the practice. Any dress code the practice adopts should curtail sloppy appearance, promote team professionalism, and enable clients to easily identify team members.

- **Personal Touches**

Team members will often want to accessorize, and any practice dress code should clearly identify what is or is not acceptable in the practice. Then, team members can be asked to cover or remove accessories that may offend the clientele and do not fit the practice image. However, be sure that policies do not infringe on any religious practices (eg, piercings and tattoos may be common in some Eastern religions). Address each member individually about such items and make any necessary accommodations.

- **Scents & Smells**

In a veterinary practice, it is impossible to completely avoid unpleasant smells, but they should be minimized as much as possible. The dress


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code should contain a section about limiting strong smells and aromas, such as body odor and perfumes. Similarly, the practice in general should limit scented candles, incense, and air fresheners. Keep in mind, also, that some team members and clients may be sensitive to certain smells or fragrances. When strong-smelling products (eg, patient grooming sprays, coat fresheners) are necessary, a special area should be set aside for their use.

Leadership should always get input (eg, on the colors of scrubs) from team members when determining the practice dress code, and once the code is in place, should always explain the reason for the practice's policies and restrictions. Ideally, a dress code should also include a blanket policy to be used at leadership's discretion:

***It is impossible and undesirable to define an absolute code for dress, markings, piercings, and fragrances. Our practice will apply a rule of reason on a case-by-case basis.***

Team members may argue for freedom of individual expression in the way they dress, but in the workplace, any dress code or policy is "law." Outside the practice, they are free to express themselves.

Creating a welcoming environment for clients and patients is critical to the success of the practice. The team's appearance represents the clients' expectations. Be sure to document the factors that fulfill these expectations and ensure consistency to maintain the practice style. 

**See Aids & Resources, back page, for references & suggested reading.**

## COMFORTIS®-Cats (spinosad)

Chewable Tablets

Before using COMFORTIS chewable tablets, please consult the product insert, a summary of which follows:

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

### Indications:

COMFORTIS kills fleas and is indicated for the prevention and treatment of flea infestations (*Ctenocephalides felis*), for one month, on cats and kittens 14 weeks of age and older and two pounds of body weight or greater.

### Dosage and Administration:

COMFORTIS is given orally once a month, at the minimum dosage of 22.5 mg/lb (50 mg/kg). Administer COMFORTIS with food for maximum effectiveness. If vomiting occurs within an hour of administration, redose with another full dose. If a dose is missed, administer COMFORTIS with food and resume a monthly dosing schedule.

### Contraindications:

There are no known contraindications for the use of COMFORTIS.

### Warnings:

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

### Precautions:

Use with caution with concomitant extra-label use of ivermectin. The safe use of COMFORTIS in breeding, pregnant, or lactating cats has not been evaluated.

### Adverse Reactions:

In a well-controlled US field study, which included a total of 211 cats (139 treated with COMFORTIS and 72 treated with an active topical control once a month for 3 treatments), no serious adverse reactions were attributed to the administration of COMFORTIS. The most frequently reported adverse reaction in cats was vomiting.

Percentage of Cats (%) with Adverse Reactions

	Month 1		Month 2		Month 3	
	COMFORTIS (n=139)	Active Topical Control (n=72)	COMFORTIS (n=135)	Active Topical Control (n=69)	COMFORTIS (n=132)	Active Topical Control (n=67)
Vomiting	14.4	1.4	14.8	1.4	13.6	4.5
Lethargy	3.6	0	0.7	0	1.5	1.5
Anorexia	2.2	0	0.7	0	2.3	1.5
Weight Loss	1.4	0	0	0	3	0
Diarrhea	1.4	1.4	0.7	2.9	2.3	1.5

Over the 3-month (3-dose) study, vomiting occurred on the day of or the day after at least one dose in 28.1% (39/139) of the cats treated with COMFORTIS and in 2.8% (2/72) of the cats treated with the active topical control. Three of the 139 cats treated with COMFORTIS vomited on the day of or the day after all three doses. Two cats that received extra-label topical ivermectin on Day 1 of the field study developed lethargy on Day 1 after COMFORTIS administration on Day 0.

For technical assistance or to report an adverse drug experience, call Elanco at 1-888-545-5973. Additional information can be found at [www.comfortis.com](http://www.comfortis.com). For a complete listing of adverse reactions for spinosad reported to the Center for Veterinary Medicine, see Adverse Drug Experience Reports under <http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/SafetyHealth/ProductSafetyInformation>

### Effectiveness:

In a well-controlled laboratory study, COMFORTIS began to kill fleas 30 minutes after administration and demonstrated 98% effectiveness within 4 hours. COMFORTIS kills fleas before they can lay eggs. In a separate well-controlled laboratory study, COMFORTIS demonstrated 100% effectiveness on the first day following treatment and >90% effectiveness on Day 30.

If a severe environmental infestation exists, fleas may persist for a period of time after dose administration due to the emergence of adult fleas from pupae already in the environment. In a field study conducted in households with existing flea infestations, flea count reductions of 97.5% were observed one month after the first treatment and 99.3% after three monthly treatments with COMFORTIS. Cats with pre-existing signs of flea allergy dermatitis showed improvement in erythema, papules, scaling, alopecia, dermatitis/pyodermitis, and pruritus as a direct result of eliminating the fleas.

### Storage Information:

Store at 20 to 25°C (68 to 77°F), excursions permitted between 15 to 30°C (59 to 86°F).

### How Supplied:

COMFORTIS is available in four tablet sizes for use in cats: 90, 140, 270 or 560 mg. Each tablet size is available in color-coded packages of 6 tablets.

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Manufactured by Elanco Animal Health, A Division of Eli Lilly and Company, Indianapolis, IN 46285

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## COMFORTIS®-Dogs (spinosad)

Chewable Tablets

Before using COMFORTIS chewable tablets, please consult the product insert, a summary of which follows:

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

### Indications:

COMFORTIS kills fleas and is indicated for the prevention and treatment of flea infestations (*Ctenocephalides felis*) for one month, on dogs and puppies 14 weeks of age and older and 3.3 pounds of body weight or greater.

### Dosage and Administration:

COMFORTIS is given orally once a month, at the recommended minimum dosage of 13.5 mg/lb (30 mg/kg). Administer COMFORTIS with food for maximum effectiveness. If vomiting occurs within an hour of administration, redose with another full dose. If a dose is missed, administer COMFORTIS with food and resume a monthly dosing schedule.

### Contraindications:

There are no known contraindications for the use of COMFORTIS.

### Warnings:

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

Serious adverse reactions have been reported following concomitant extra-label use of ivermectin with COMFORTIS (see POST APPROVAL EXPERIENCE).

### Precautions:

COMFORTIS is for use in dogs and puppies 14 weeks of age and older.

Use with caution in breeding females and in dogs with pre-existing epilepsy. The safe use of COMFORTIS in breeding males has not been evaluated.

### Adverse Reactions:

In a well-controlled US field study, which included a total of 470 dogs (330 dogs treated with COMFORTIS and 140 dogs treated with an active control), no serious adverse reactions were observed with COMFORTIS. All reactions were regarded as mild and did not result in any dog being removed from the study. The most frequently reported adverse reaction in dogs in the COMFORTIS and active control groups was vomiting. The occurrence of vomiting, most commonly within 48 hours after treatment, decreased with repeated doses of COMFORTIS.

Percentage of Dogs (%) with Adverse Reactions

	Month 1		Month 2		Month 3	
	COMFORTIS Chewable Tablets (N=330)	Active Topical Control (N=139)	COMFORTIS Chewable Tablets (N=262)	Active Topical Control (N=124)	COMFORTIS Chewable Tablets (N=260)	Active Topical Control (N=125)
Vomiting	12.7	12.2	7.5	3.2	5.8	4.8
Decreased Appetite	9.1	5	2.8	1.6	1.9	0.8
Lethargy	7.6	5	3.5	4	1.2	0.8
Diarrhea	6.7	5	4.3	0.8	1.2	0
Cough	3.9	5	0.4	2.4	0	0
Polydipsia	2.4	1.4	0.7	0	0.4	0
Vocalization	1.8	0	0.4	0	0.4	0
Increased Appetite	1.5	0	0.4	0.8	0.4	0
Erythema	1.5	0	0.4	0	0.4	0
Hypersensitivity	1.2	1.4	0	0	0.4	0
Excessive Salivation	1.2	0	0.4	0	0	0

\* This number (n=139) is less than the total number of dogs in the safety population for the active control group (n=140) because one dog joined the study late and was only dosed at Month 3. In US and European field studies, no dogs experienced seizures when dosed with COMFORTIS at the therapeutic dose range of 13.5-27.3 mg/lb (30-60 mg/kg), including 4 dogs with pre-existing epilepsy. Four epileptic dogs that received higher than the maximum recommended dose of 27.3 mg/lb (60 mg/kg) experienced at least one seizure within the week following the second dose of COMFORTIS, but no seizures following the first and third doses. The cause of the seizures observed in the field studies could not be determined.

### Post Approval Experience (June 2009):

The following adverse reactions are based on post-approval adverse drug event reporting. The adverse reactions are listed in decreasing order of frequency: vomiting, depression/lethargy, anorexia, ataxia, diarrhea, pruritus, trembling, hypersalivation and seizures.

Following concomitant extra-label use of ivermectin with COMFORTIS, some dogs have experienced the following clinical signs: trembling/twitching, salivation/drooling, seizures, ataxia, mydriasis, blindness and disorientation. Post approval experience continues to support the safety of COMFORTIS when used concurrently with heartworm preventatives according to label directions.

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### Effectiveness:

In a well-controlled laboratory study, COMFORTIS began to kill fleas 30 minutes after administration and demonstrated 100% effectiveness within 4 hours. COMFORTIS kills fleas before they can lay eggs. In a severe environmental infestation exists, fleas may persist for a period of time after dose administration due to the emergence of adult fleas from pupae already in the environment. In field studies conducted in households with existing flea infestations of varying severity, flea reductions of 98.0% to 99.8% were observed over the course of 3 monthly treatments with COMFORTIS. Dogs with signs of flea allergy dermatitis showed improvement in erythema, papules, scaling, alopecia, dermatitis/pyodermitis and pruritus as a direct result of eliminating the fleas.

### Storage Information:

Store at 20-25°C (68-77°F), excursions permitted between 15 to 30°C (59 to 86°F).

### How Supplied:

COMFORTIS is available in six tablet sizes for use in dogs: 90, 140, 270, 560, 810 or 1620 mg. Each tablet size is available in color-coded packages of 6 tablets.

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