Inappropriate use of antibiotics (antimicrobials) could harm your pet, you and your family and is a threat to global health. Everyone needs to act responsibly including you as an animal owner.

**ANTIBIOTICS ARE IMPORTANT**
Many infections cannot be managed without antibiotics but resistance towards these is becoming an issue. Owners and veterinarians need to work together to solve this.

**ARE ANTIBIOTICS REALLY NECESSARY?**
- Not all infections are caused by bacteria, e.g. some are viral and do not respond to antibiotics. Also, not all bacterial infections require antibiotic therapy.
- Many wound and skin infections can be resolved by local wound care and antibacterial washes. Ask your veterinarian to show you how to do this.

**DIAGNOSTICS ARE IMPORTANT**
To investigate if a bacterial infection is the cause of your animal’s illness, the veterinarian might need to collect samples to look for signs of infection or to identify the bacteria involved through bacterial culture. Supporting this will increase the chance of your animal’s recovery without unnecessary risks (e.g. treatment failure).

**DON’T EXPECT ANTIBIOTICS**
Do not demand antibiotics if your veterinarian does not prescribe them; in most cases it is not appropriate to use antibiotics in a precautionary manner. Unless your animal is seriously ill and is admitted to an animal hospital for care, always ask your veterinarian if the prescribed antibiotics are really necessary, or if something else could be tried first.

**ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR VETERINARIAN’S ADVICE**
- Give the antibiotics as instructed. Contact your veterinarian if the treatment is not effective within the recommended period.
- Do not change dosage or stop therapy in advance and keep your follow up appointments.
- Do not share antibiotics with other animals or animal owners.
- Never use left over medicines.

**HANDLE YOUR ANIMAL IN A CLEAN WAY**
Always use gloves and disinfect your hands before and after attending to wounds or cleaning ears.

**KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT**
If your veterinarian is aware of the correct protocols for hygiene and infection control, he/she will wear a short-sleeved shirt or coat to enable proper disinfection of hands between patients.
- No rings, wristwatches or jewellery should be worn.
- Hands should be clean and disinfected before handling your animal.
- Gloves should be worn when handling infected tissue or wounds.

This poster has been made by the Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA) in collaboration with the Bella Moss Foundation.