

## Fort Dodge Responds to Dog Owner Uproar

**A flurry of e-mail forwards claims its topical flea and tick product ProMeris caused adverse reactions in seven dogs.**

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Fort Dodge Animal Health has responded to a flurry of e-mail forwards and online message board topics that claims that its topical flea and tick product ProMeris was the cause of adverse reactions in seven dogs.

In a company statement, Fort Dodge says that despite the ongoing e-mails, it appears that the report is isolated to one case.

“Based on the high number of e-mail forwards and Internet postings, it may appear there are multiple adverse events being reported,” the letter reads. “However, based on our research, it appears that all of this online activity stems from a single case.”

Fort Dodge was contacted on April 11, 2008, by a veterinarian reporting an adverse reaction involving six Siberian Huskies and one mixed-breed dog, all of whom live in the same household. The report states that the dogs exhibited vomiting, lethargy, pruritis and behavior change several hours after ProMeris was applied.

Fort Dodge says it is working with the veterinarian to collect all information related to the adverse event.

Since the product’s introduction to the market late last year, the most common adverse event reported following the administration of ProMeris is lethargy, which can occur if a dog orally ingests the product.

“We suspect that the dogs orally ingested the product by licking each other after application,” says Tom Lenz, DVM, vice president of professional services at Fort Dodge.

The widespread e-mail also claims that the owner of the dogs experienced similar symptoms, such as disorientation and swollen mouth, nose, and eyes.

“It’s possible that the owner kissed the dogs shortly after application or that the product somehow came in contact with her mucus membranes,” Lenz says.

Fort Dodge recommends that veterinary staff members describe proper application techniques when introducing the product to pet owners. Unlike some other flea and tick control products, ProMeris is applied to the dog’s skin in a single location.

Fort Dodge says that ProMeris contains a patent-protected formulation, which is designed to prevent absorption through the skin and that it shouldn’t be compared with other amitraz formulations.

The amitraz formulation works by disrupting the tick’s normal nerve function, which leads to reduced feeding and attachment, paralysis, and death of the tick, according to the company.

ProMeris also contains the active ingredient metaflumizone, a new compound in the animal health industry that attacks fleas’ nervous systems resulting in paralysis and death of the flea, according to the company.

The next step is to wait for the full report and then discuss possible reimbursement, Lenz says. Typically, Fort Dodge will pay all diagnostic tests as well as “reasonable” treatment costs.

Fort Dodge will also file a report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

“It’s unfortunate that something on the Internet has been blown out of proportion,” Lenz says. “Many people think that what’s written is true, and that’s not always the case.”