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Vigilance for veterinary medicinal products

Annual report 2025

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Summary of adverse reactions reported in Switzerland in 2025

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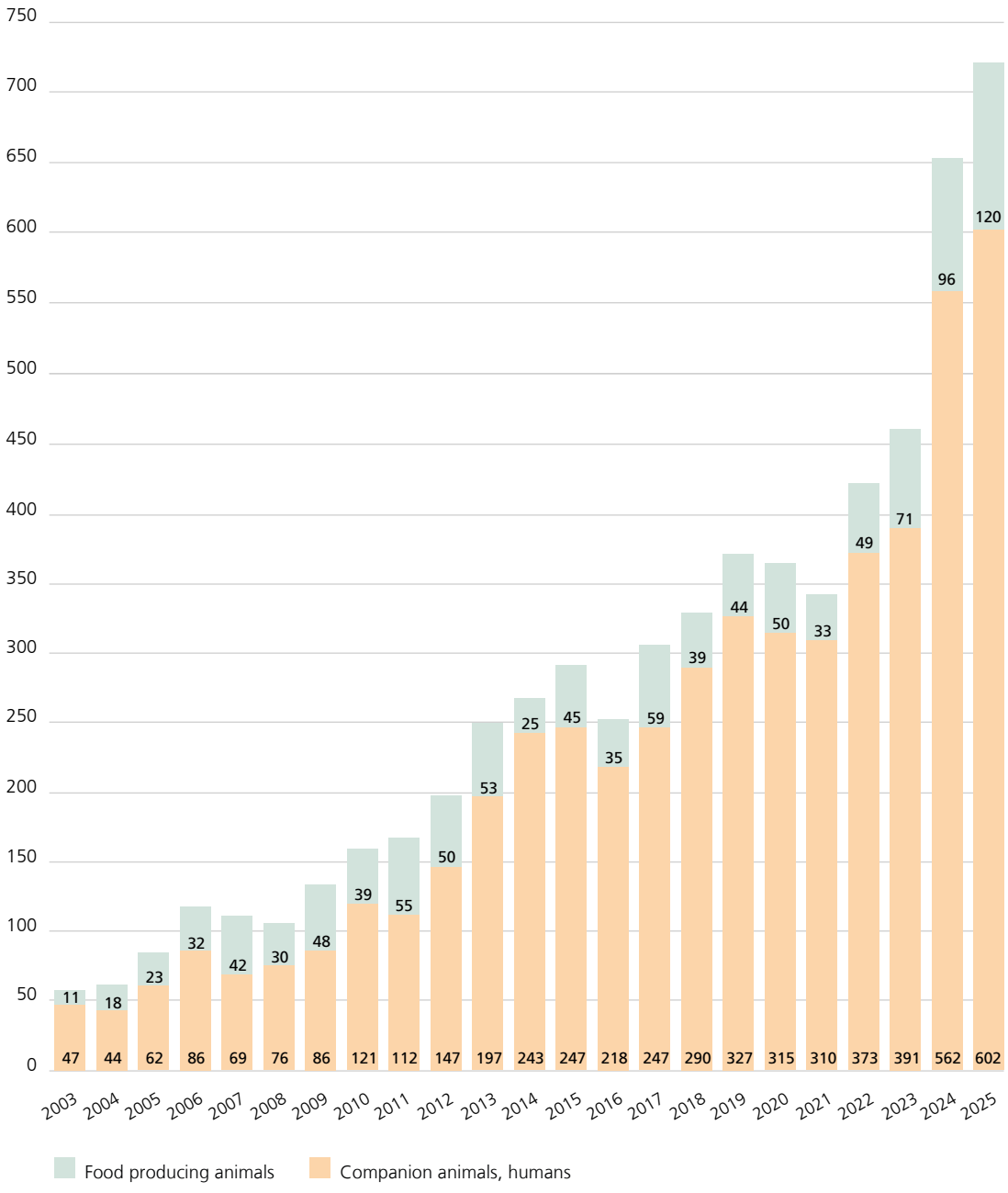
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1 A summary of the main points

- 722 reports, increase compared with 2024: 9.7%
- Most frequently affected species: 424 dogs, 161 cats, 65 cattle/cows/calves, 25 horses
- Most frequent medicinal product types: antiparasitics (187 reports), immunological veterinary medicinal products (156), veterinary medicinal products to modulate the nervous system (115), hormones (92)
- 175 cases of suspected lack of efficacy, largely for antiparasitics and hormones
- 225 cases passed on by Tox Info Suisse:
  - 70 cases of animal exposure to veterinary medicinal products, including 59 cases of accidental ingestion of flavoured tablets by dogs/cats
  - 155 cases of human exposure to veterinary medicinal products
- 30 signal procedures initiated, 12 closed

2 Evolution of the number of reports since 2003

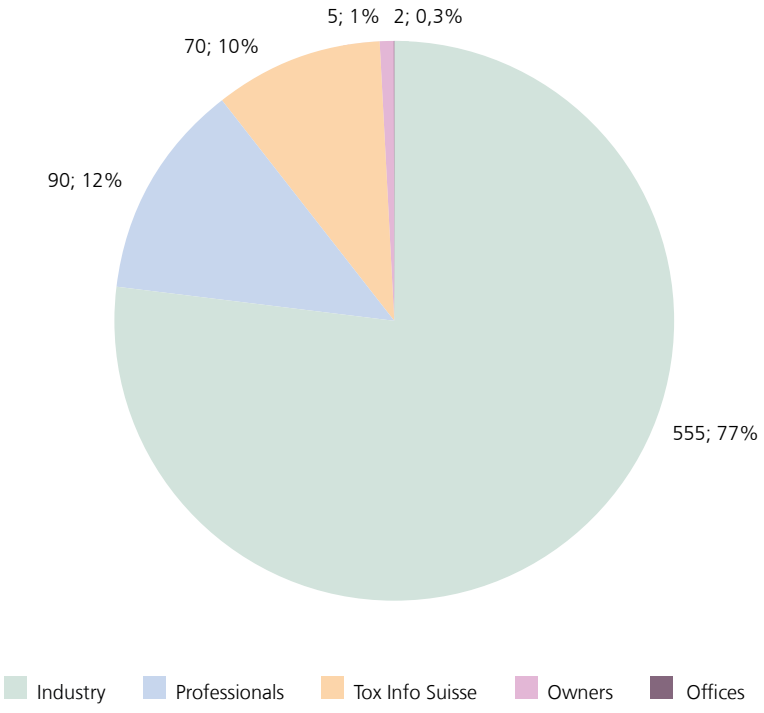


3 International comparison

- Switzerland: 722 reports (2025)
- Germany: 4,858 reports (2025)
- United Kingdom: 3,596 reports (April 2025 – March 2026)
- Total EU: 33,646 reports (2025)

4 Distribution of the reports

4.1 Distribution of the reports by source



Once again, the majority of the reports (555; 77%) were submitted by the marketing authorisation holders. These refer almost entirely to cases reported to marketing authorisation holders by practising veterinarians. A similar pattern of distribution for the different sources has been observed for years both in Switzerland and various European countries.

4.2 Distribution of the reports by ATCvet code

	Number of reports and % of the respective total							
Medicine category by ATCvet code	**All species**		**Dog**		**Cat**		**Livestock**	
QA: Alimentary tract and metabolism	29	4.0%	6	1.4%	17	10.6%	6	4.9%
QC: Cardiovascular system	9	1.2%	8	1.9%	1	0.6%		
QD: Dermatologicals	20	2.8%	17	4.0%	2	1.2%		
QG: Genitourinary system, sex hormones	11	1.5%	7	1.7%	4	2.5%		
QH: Hormonal preparations (excl. sex hormones and insulins)	92	12.7%	76	17.9%	16	9.9%		
QI: Immunological veterinary medicinal products	156	21.6%	60	14.2%	22	13.7%	71	58.2%
QJ: Anti-infectives	25	3.5%	4	0.9%	5	3.1%	16	13.1%
QL: Antineoplastic and immunomodulating agents	2	0.3%	1	0.2%	1	0.6%		
QM: Musculoskeletal system	41	5.7%	31	7.3%	9	5.6%	1	0.8%
QN: Nervous system	115	15.9%	67	15.8%	32	19.9%	11	9.0%
QP: Antiparasitics	187	25.9%	137	32.3%	35	21.7%	10	8.2%
QR: Respiratory system	2	0.3%					2	1.6%
QS: Sensory organs	6	0.8%	2	0.5%	3	1.9%		
QV: Various	1	0.1%	1	0.2%				
"QZ" Reclassified veterinary medicinal products	26	3.6%	7	1.7%	14	8.7%	5	4.1%
	722	100.0%	424	100.0%	161	100.0%	122	100.0%

The total for all species may be higher than the total of the individual columns (dogs, cats, livestock) because reports of adverse reactions in pets, exotic animals and humans were also submitted.

The distribution across the affected animal species has remained almost unchanged in recent years. The largest group, with 585 reports (81%), is made up of small animals (dogs, cats). They are followed in descending order by cattle/cows/calves with 65 reports (8.8%), and horses with 25 reports (3.5%). Fewer than five reports were received for the remaining animal species. In addition, 12 reports of adverse drug reactions involving veterinary medicinal products in users were submitted to the marketing authorisation holders or Swissmedic in 2025. The majority involved contact with solutions of antiparasitics applied as spot-ons or accidental self-injection with vaccines.

The high number of reports in the hormones group remains primarily explicable by the large number of reported cases involving the suspected lack of efficacy of an implant that induces temporary infertility in male dogs, cats and ferrets (75 reports). These reports can be confirmed by measuring blood testosterone levels: In 26 cases, lack of efficacy was proven by a blood testosterone level in excess of the threshold, while in 18 cases it was refuted by a very low level. No information regarding testosterone levels was available for the remaining cases, for example if the animal's owner did not want a blood sample to be taken or if a new implant was inserted with no prior testosterone measurement. In the case of antiparasitics, too, 62 out of the total of 187 reports submitted related to a suspected lack of efficacy (most commonly against ticks).

Reports involving immunological veterinary medicinal products (chiefly vaccines) mainly concerned frequently used vaccines, primarily in dogs (38.4% of vaccine-related reports) and cattle (25.6% of vaccine-related reports). Local and systemic reactions (including hypersensitivity reactions) in dogs following vaccination against serious diseases such as parvovirus or canine adenovirus infection, rabies or leptospirosis were most frequently reported. Local and systemic reactions following vaccination against bluetongue virus or in connection with passive immunisation against cryptosporidiosis were reported in cattle.

As in 2024, in the 115 reports involving medicinal products to modulate the nervous system, two veterinary medicinal products containing anti-nerve growth factor (NGF) monoclonal antibodies are strongly represented with 72 reports. The distribution of the reported reactions (particularly hypersensitivity reactions, skin reactions, itching, anorexia, polyuria and polydipsia) remained largely unchanged on previous years, and it can be assumed that publications and media reports have increased awareness and, therefore, reporting rates. Eight reports described atypical periarticular changes in dogs. Such changes were investigated in greater detail in an article by Armitage published in March 2026,[1] and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) demanded modification of the Information for healthcare professionals[2]. The corresponding communication was published on the Swissmedic website on 29 September 2026[3]. Such cases continue to be monitored and analysed.

[1] *www.magonlinelibrary.com/doi/abs/10.12968/coan.2026.0009, https://doi.org/10.12968/coan.2026.0009*
[2] *www.ema.europa.eu/en/news/meeting-highlights-committee-veterinary-medicinal-products-cvmp-19-21-may-2026*
[3] *www.swissmedic.ch/swissmedic/de/home/tierarzneimittel/market-surveillance/dhpc-veterinary-medicines/hpc-librela-ad-us-vet-injlsg.html*

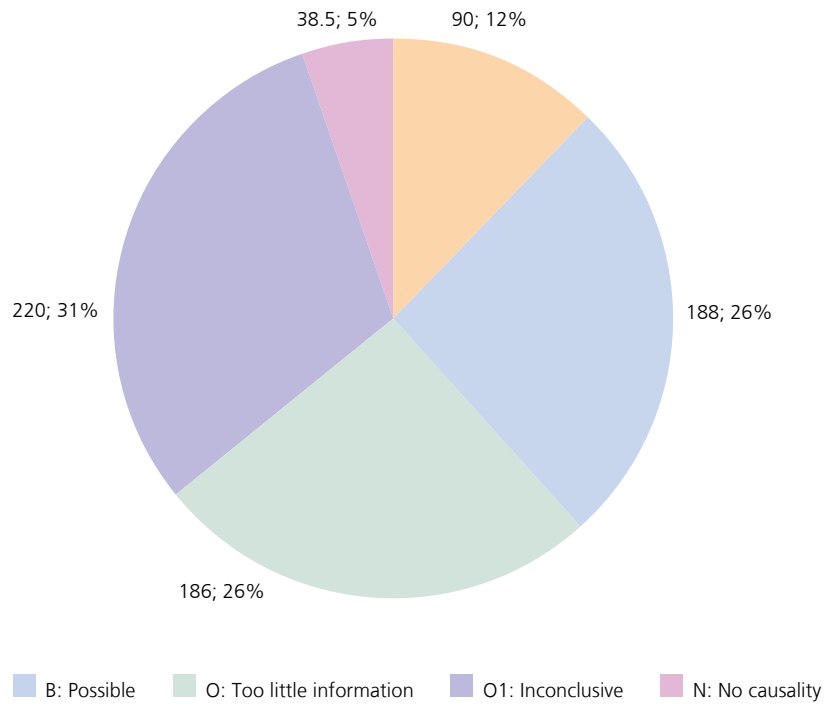
Almost half the reports involving veterinary medicinal products that act on the digestive tract were attributable to one oral antidiabetic (13 of 29 reports). The veterinary medicinal product in question was authorised in 2023 and offers a new option for treating diabetes mellitus in cats. However, its active substance, velagliflozin, is not interchangeable with insulin, and any change in treatment requires careful consideration and preparation. Compared with 2024 (40 reports), the number of reported adverse reactions involving this veterinary medicinal product declined strongly. This could be attributable partly to the sending of a Direct Healthcare Professional Communication (DHPC) and various modifications to the Information for healthcare professionals during 2025, and partly to the "Weber effect"[4] (reporting frequency declines after approximately the second year following authorisation).

Notable...

- Erroneous subcutaneous administration of a vaccine for intranasal administration in dogs. A phlegmon developed, accompanied by fever and pain. The animal was given antibiotics and recovered.
- A solution for injection of an analgesic was administered orally to a horse for a period of several days. The horse subsequently displayed gastrointestinal symptoms.
- The loss of the majority of a hive of honeybees was reported following the use of strips impregnated with an organic acid. The strips were placed directly on the brood frames without allowing sufficient space for evaporation.
- One lack-of-efficacy report concerned a bovine that had been treated with a reclassified vaccine to prevent sexual odour. The literature contains descriptions of the vaccine being used successfully in cattle.

[4] *Weber, J. Epidemiology of adverse reactions to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. In: Advances in Inflammation Research, Raven Press, New York, NY. 1984.*

4.3 Distribution of the reports by causality



5 Reports from Tox Info Suisse

5.1 Adverse reactions to veterinary medicinal products in animals

Tox Info Suisse passed 70 such cases on to Swissmedic in 2025. In 59 cases, the reports involved the accidental ingestion of veterinary medicinal products by animals, very frequently in the form of flavoured tablets. All veterinary medicinal products intended to be administered over a protracted period may be affected if they contain flavourings (including anti-inflammatories, oral antiparasitics and antibiotics). Although the overdoses were substantial in some cases (e.g. a 10-fold overdose of the anti-inflammatory product carprofen or 200 mg/kg of the combination amoxicillin/clavulanic acid), they were one-off incidents that were frequently without consequence. Unfortunately, information about the further course was received in only very few cases.

Notable...

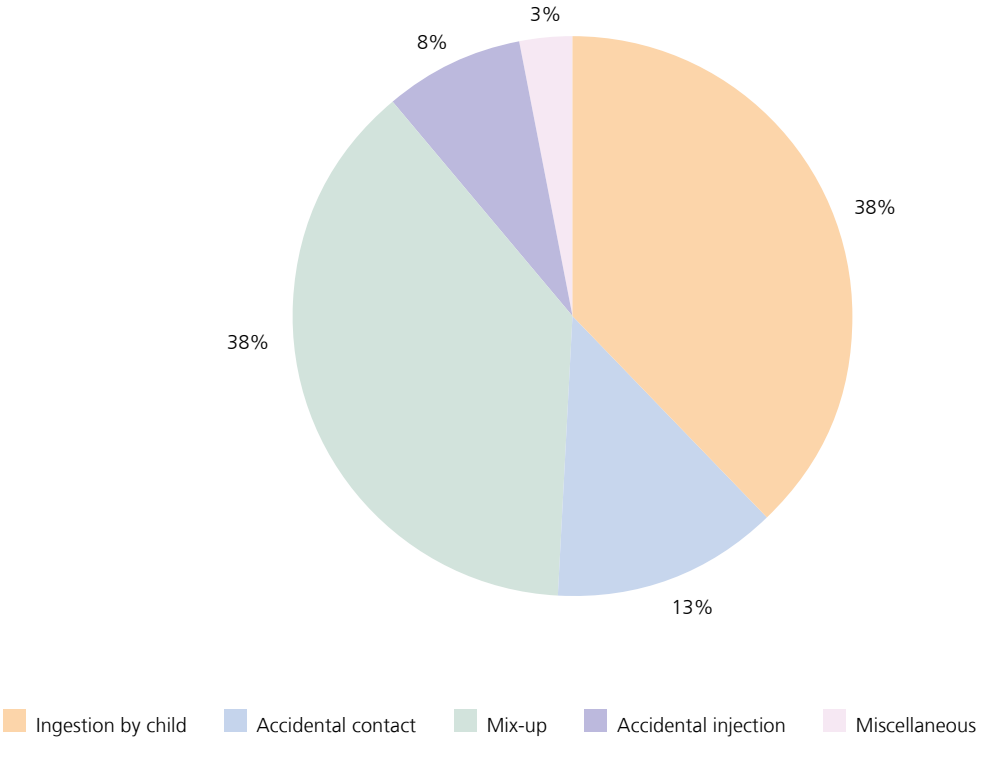
- Oral administration of an undiluted organophosphate pesticide to a goat. At the time the phone call was made, the animal was not exhibiting symptoms. Unfortunately, there was no follow-up.

- A dog was erroneously given a complete oral syringe of an anthelmintic paste, resulting in an overdose of fenbendazole of 230 mg/kg. In view of the very low intestinal absorption, the risk to the animal was negligible. The animal was not exhibiting symptoms at the time the report was submitted.

- A spot-on containing an isoxazoline was erroneously administered orally to a cat. The animal exhibited a behavioural change for which no further description is available.

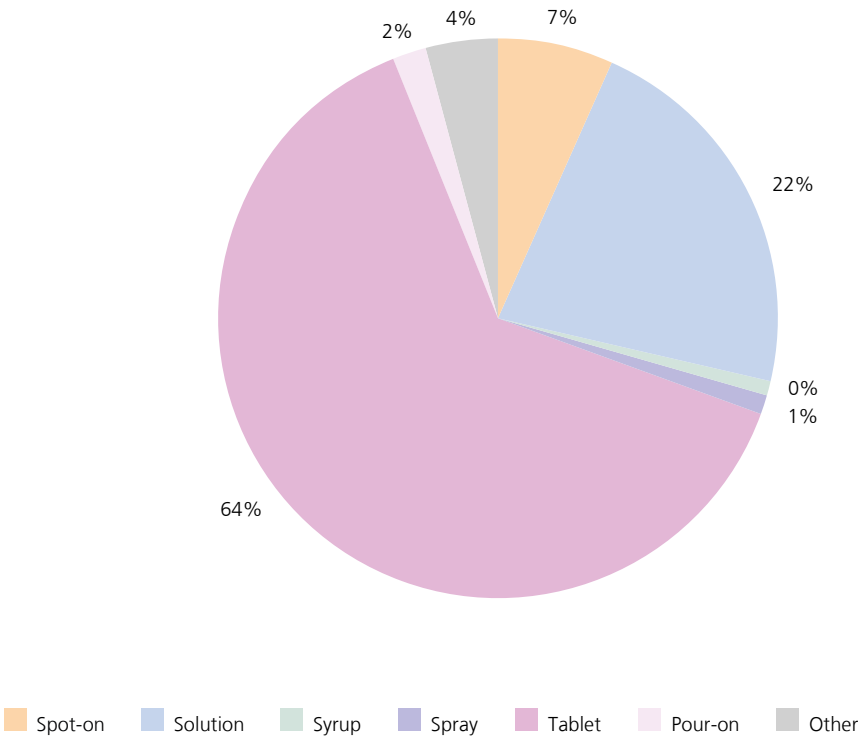
5.2 Human exposure to veterinary medicinal products

Breakdown by type of human exposure to veterinary medicines



155 cases were recorded. As in previous years, the majority of cases affecting humans involved mistaking a veterinary medicinal product for a human one (37.4%), ingestion of veterinary medicinal products by children (37.4%) and accidental contact with veterinary medicinal products (13.5%). These cases cover a very broad spectrum of veterinary medicinal products, with human exposure to veterinary medicinal products for long-term treatments – such as anti-inflammatories and antiparasitics – being reported more frequently. There were frequently no symptoms at the time of reporting, and the calls to Tox Info Suisse were primarily made as a precautionary measure.

Breakdown of human exposure according to dosage form



The classification of exposures by dosage form shows that tablets, solutions and spot-ons were most frequently involved. These are the dosage forms most frequently self-administered by the animal owners themselves, for example as antiparasitics or anti-inflammatories.

Exposures to solutions for injection tended to occur in a veterinary practice or during administration by a veterinarian, and more rarely by animal owners. 12 cases of self-injection were reported. If a case of self-injection involves a vaccine that contains mineral oil (e.g. paraffin oil, "oil adjuvant"), the wound **must be treated surgically without delay**, even if it appears small and insignificant to begin with. **Even without injection, the small residual quantities on the needle** are sufficient to trigger necrosis.

Notable...

- A spot-on insecticide was administered to a cat in the evening. The following morning, the owner's 15-month-old daughter hugged the cat, touching the product. The daughter was not displaying symptoms at the time the report was made.

- An owner opened a spot-on insecticide with her teeth because the pipette was difficult to open. This resulted in very small amount entering her mouth, causing a slight sensation of numbness in her mouth and oesophagus.

- A livestock owner transferred an antiparasitic for sheep that had been diluted with water to a different bottle "a very long time ago" (more than ten years, in fact) and had drunk from the PET bottle in question. No symptoms had been noted at the time the report was made.

- A child ate some cat food that had been mixed with an oral antidiabetic for the cat. The child was not displaying symptoms at the time the report was made.

Many of these reports of exposure should be viewed in the context of improving safety for the users and their families. The cases show vividly that elementary safety precautions, such as separating human and veterinary medicines, storing them out of reach of children and administering veterinary medicinal products as soon as the blister pack or packaging has been opened, are not always observed and are generally the cause of exposure. The cases are important for an efficient pharmacovigilance system because they cover an additional spectrum of incidents with veterinary medicinal products. For example, they help identify possible risks to those in close contact with animal patients arising from incorrect uses or abuses of veterinary medicinal products.

6 Safety signals

A safety signal is an indication of a possible new or modified risk associated with the use of a medicinal product. Pharmacovigilance reports play a crucial role in identifying safety signals. 30 signal procedures were opened in 2025, 12 were closed. In the same year, there were 25 modifications of veterinary medicinal product information in response to safety signals. Several examples of the closed safety signals that resulted in the modification of the medicinal product information for the veterinary medicinal products in question are listed below.

Some closed signals from 2025

- Facial paralysis after use of ear drops containing florfenicol, terbinafine and mometasone for the treatment of otitis externa in dogs
- Indication of the ecotoxicity of solutions for injection containing florfenicol
- Very rare anaphylaxis following the use of solutions containing ketoprofen
- Anorexia, diarrhoea and hypersensitivity reactions following injection of a veterinary medicinal product containing the active substance fluralaner
- Eye disorders, hypersensitivity reactions, inner ear disorders and local reactions after use of ear drops containing florfenicol, terbinafine and betamethasone
- Various modifications for veterinary medicinal products containing monoclonal antibodies for use in dogs and cats with osteoarthritis

7 Conclusion

The number of reports in 2025 increased almost 10% on 2024. Given the spontaneous nature of a pharmacovigilance system, it is not always possible to identify the causes of fluctuations. In 2025, there was both an increase in reports for veterinary medicinal products that had been authorised for some time (e.g. in ATCvet code QN) and a significant reduction in reports for more recent veterinary medicinal products, for example in ATCvet code QA. A general increase in the number of reported adverse reactions was observed across all groups of medicinal products and all sources, as was an increase in human exposures. It can be concluded from this that the increase is attributable in general to greater awareness of the reporting system and to greater participation by veterinarians in the monitoring of veterinary medicinal products.

Pharmacovigilance for veterinary medicinal products remains an important tool for improving the safety of such products and for reducing the risks to the individuals who use them and their families. Every report submitted can make a crucial contribution to this end.

To conclude this report, we would like to thank all practising veterinarians and all other reporters who took the time to submit reports on observed adverse reactions during the course of the year.

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