

Alternative Methods To Administer Medication To Birds

An avian vet explains other methods used to medicate pet birds.

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Injectable antibiotics is an alternative method for medicating a bird.

In the September 2008 issue of Bird Talk magazine, Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP, Avian Practice, gave techniques on administering medication to your bird ("Causes & Cures"). Here are her views on two other methods for medicating a bird.

Alternative Method #1 – Injectable Antibiotic

Another alternative for medicating a bird is by using an injectable antibiotic, a special formulation of doxycycline that provides antibiotic levels for seven days once it is injected into the breast muscle. However, this antibiotic is not available in the United States and must be imported from Germany or the Netherlands, or from other countries that make this particular formulation. The injectable doxycycline that is made in the U.S. can only be given intravenously and is not buffered for intramuscular administration. While "doxy" is traditionally thought of as treatment for psittacosis, it is also useful for many other avian bacterial infections, as well. This medication only requires once a week dosing by injection, so it is a wonderful alternative in many situations where antibiotics are required and the owner cannot or will not medicate the bird, for whatever reason.

Alternative Method #2 – Skin Patches

Transdermal skin patches are another method for administering medications for humans and mammalian patients. However, the patch is not usually employed by avian vets routinely, because dosing is an issue, as is the risk of the bird removing the patch and chewing it up or swallowing it, which may provide the bird with a huge overdose of medication. In the future, this method might be utilized for avian patients but, for now, this is not a safe alternative in most cases.