

Press release  
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## Antibiotics no free ride to fewer surgical site infections

*AniCura, one of Europe's leading providers of high-quality veterinary care for companion animals, has completed a major study of infections and the use of antibiotics in surgery. The study, covering 1 000 dogs that underwent surgery at 50 different animal hospitals and clinics throughout Europe, shows that antibiotics are not a guarantee to avoid surgical site infections.*

While antibiotic prophylaxis in surgery is common throughout the health care sector, and in many cases crucial for avoiding infections, it does not automatically lead to fewer surgical site infections.

- Clinics that often use antibiotics prophylactically do not have a lower prevalence of surgical site infections than others, says Ulrika Grönlund, Group Medical Quality Manager at AniCura.

A total of 1 035 dogs were included in the study, performed between February and April 2017. The dogs were checked seven days and thirty days after surgery to allow reliable detection of any infections resulting from the surgeries.

At clinics in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, infections occurred in 6.3 per cent of cases, while only one third of the patients received prophylactic antibiotics. In Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, the rate of infections was about the same (5.9 per cent), even though over 80 per cent of patients received antibiotic prophylaxis.

- Seen from a European perspective, I am convinced we can reduce the use of antibiotic prophylaxis to address the selection of multi-resistant bacteria without increasing the risk of infections. If the right techniques and hygiene procedures are applied, antibiotics should not be necessary in surgeries in non-infected tissue, says Ulrika Grönlund.

The purpose of AniCura's studies of medical quality and patient safety in veterinary care is to identify and map areas for improvements, as well as to share best practice across borders and between clinics.

### Additional results from the study:

- The study covered 50 animal hospitals and clinics and 1 035 surgical patients in six European countries.
- Overall, 75 per cent of the cases were so-called clean surgeries, i.e. carried out in non-infected tissue without touching organs with normal bacterial flora. Prophylactic antibiotics were administered in half of the surgeries.
- On average, infections occurred in 6 per cent of surgeries, in line with what is described as normal in scientific veterinary literature.
- In all, fewer patients received antibiotics after surgery compared to last year – this year 50 per cent received antibiotics after surgery compared to 61 per cent in the 2016 study.

***For further information, please contact***

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**About AniCura**

AniCura is a family of well-known animal hospitals and clinics specialised in veterinary care for companion animals. Born out of the idea that sharing resources creates opportunities for better veterinary care, the company was established in 2011 as the first merger of companion animal hospitals in the Nordic region. Today, AniCura is a role model within specialised veterinary care and a valued partner for pet owners and referring veterinarians across Europe.

The company offers a wide range of high quality medical services covering preventive and basic health care as well as advanced diagnostics, internal medicine, intensive care, surgery and orthopaedics. AniCura also provides rehabilitation, physiotherapy and dietary advice and offers selected pet food and care products.

AniCura provides modern, high-quality veterinary care for pets at 150 European locations and creates peace of mind for pet owners through excellent access and patient safety. Every year, AniCura's 3 000 passionate veterinary professionals attend to more than 1.5 million companion animal patients. AniCura is a trusted training and referral body.

For information on how AniCura is working to shape the future of veterinary care, please visit our website [www.anicuragroup.com](http://www.anicuragroup.com)