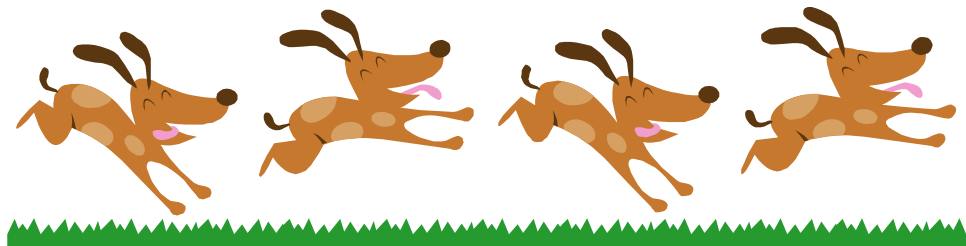




Kenny Kramm has worked in the retail pharmacy business for almost 3 decades. Yeah, I know – sounds kind of serious, dull, and nerdy. Nothing could be further from the truth! In addition to being a successful entrepreneur, Kenny's interest in making sure the right medicine

is dispensed using a formulation that can be readily taken by each individual patient has a very personal story. While working at his family's pharmacy, his premature, newborn daughter was inadvertently administered another baby's medication in the hospital – leaving his previously healthy daughter now neurologically disabled from a brain hemorrhage. One of the many challenges he and his wife Shelley faced was getting their new baby to take her seizure medication several times daily. Kenny discovered that changing the flavor of her medication turned the frequent battles over taking medicine into an easy routine. This started his amazing journey into compounding medications and finally led him to develop the company *Center Pet Pharmacy* where individual needs of pets are met through compounding.



First, Kenny – I am so inspired by your story! You and your wife faced the results of a tragic error with such courage and optimism. Your story will really inspire others who learn they will be raising a special needs child. Before we talk about your work, do you have any advice to share with other families?

KK – Thank you so much for your kind words. I believe that every person who has a special needs child has asked the question “God, why my child?” Everybody in this circumstance has to decide; am I going to be depressed about this and thus go through life miserable or am I going to try to help my child the best way I know how. Shelley and I decided to help Hadley any way we possibly could. This decision brought a lot of happiness into our lives because we could see that what we were doing was making Hadley happy. Sadly, you realize you will never have the life you thought you would. You see other families with children and think to yourself, “That’s what I had planned. That was supposed to be my life.” And the pain of that will never ever go away; because that dream is a significant loss. But if you realize that, although your child is different, your child has many wonderful gifts and there are many things to be happy about and celebrate. Love them the best you can, do the most you possibly can... and help them to accept themselves the way they are.



That's wonderful advice that can really be taken by all of us – no matter what our circumstances. Let's shift gears and start talking about medication compounding. Can you explain what it means to have medications "compounded"?

KK – Pharmacy compounding is the art and science of preparing customized medications for patients. Its practice dates back to the origins of pharmacy; yet, compounding presence in the pharmacy profession has changed over the years. We at *Center Pet Pharmacy* pride ourselves at being experts in compounding and finding the best solution for your pet's needs.

Compounding medication options available at *Center Pet Pharmacy* include making:

- Capsules
- Chewable tablets
- Flavored solutions and suspensions
- Medications no longer commercially prepared
- Medications in strengths not commercially prepared
- Homeopathic, holistic, and herbal formulations
- Ophthalmic preparations
- Transdermal gels

Can any pharmacist compound medications or do you need special training?

KK – Pharmacists are taught compounding as part of their pharmacy school curriculum. So no extra training is needed for standard compounding. Some pharmacists, like many of ours at *Center Pet Pharmacy*, have gone on to take advanced courses in compounding, giving them a wider range of medications they can compound and more diverse forms they can work with.

And how does one find a compounding pharmacist?

KK – You can find a compounding pharmacy mostly by asking local pharmacies in your area if they know a compounding pharmacy. If you are looking for a veterinary compounding pharmacist, that's even more specific and difficult. For any type of compounding you can always try a

Google search.

Compounding clearly has lots of great uses – especially for kids, seniors, and those with difficulty taking traditional medications due to a variety of health conditions. What got you interested in compounding medicines for pets?

KK – My interest for compounding really started with my daughter and helping her to take the medicine that was so crucial to her existence. Then once I had her problems solved, I moved on to pediatrics as a whole. I realized that if Hadley was having this problem, there were plenty of other children that were in need of this service.



After a while I started getting calls from people asking if we carried tuna flavor or cheese flavor. I thought that these were strange flavors for small children to request, so I asked why these folks were asking for these flavors and it was unanimously, “It is not for my child, but my cat or dog”. So right then I realized that there was a problem that was not being addressed.

Animals were not taking their medications because they were in forms or had tastes they did not like. I saw people get totally frustrated by this and just stop giving the medication because it was so difficult. This led to much

longer recovery times. Some never recovered and their lives were cut short. “How unfortunate,” I thought. That was when I decided to put all my energy toward veterinary medicine and I started *Center Pet Pharmacy*. We have worked on innovative techniques and formulations that have helped many animals take their medications the way they should; thus, the animal recovers more quickly and with far less trauma to the pet and the pet parent.

When should compounding be considered for pets?

KK – There are many reasons that compounding should be considered for your pet. If your pet needs a strength of a medication that is not commercially made, it can be compounded. If a pet requires a certain mixture of medications – whether it is oral medication or creams and ointments that are not commercially made – these can be compounded. Compounding a medication in a form that your pet takes easily can lessen the trauma of trying to pill an animal. This trauma is felt by the pet and the owner. Compounding can also lessen the discomfort of dry pilling your pet. (Think of yourself taking an Extra Strength Tylenol with no water!) Making a liquid or suspension version of a medication that tastes good (we have over 40 flavors to choose from) or a tasty chewable tablet can make life and recovery much easier. In extreme cases where a pet won't take any medication in any form orally, we can also make transdermal gels. With a gel, you can use a very small amount of gel and rub into the pinna of your pet's ear. (The *pinna* is the outer, visible portion of the ear.) Using transdermal gels, pets don't even realize they are being medicated. The medication contained in the transdermal gel passes through the skin and into the blood system.

You should, however, be a bit cautious when getting pet transdermals; this is the newest form of medication and it does not work with every medication. So make sure your pharmacists, like all of ours, are trained and well versed in which medications can be made transdermally and work well and for which medications this format just does not work.

Are there any really neat compounded products that might be of interest to pet owners?

KK – The answer to this is yes – but with a caveat. It totally depends on the animal and what their needs are. I think the transdermal gel is one of the most interesting overall because it is so new and it does not require oral administration. As the world of transdermal medications grows, we

will have more data on which gels actually work the same as those medications that are administered orally. Right now, a lot of the information we have is from anecdotal evidence of what works. As time passes, we will have hard test results for the majority of drugs to tell us whether the same blood concentration of the medication is achieved orally or transdermally and pharmacists can offer this alternative where we know it will work best.

Again, it is very important to go to a pharmacy that knows which medications work equally when given well transdermally as they do when given orally. Some pharmacists will say they can make anything into a transdermal. Although pharmacists can do this, it is very important to make sure that the pharmacist knows which medications work transdermally and which don't.

Are there any compounded medications you use for your own pets?

KK – I have had both cats and dogs, so I have used compounded medications quite a lot. I usually use the flavored liquids. My pets seem to like them the best. The dogs in particular love the beef and bacon flavors. They will lick favored medication right off the plate or I can put it on a little of their food (not a whole meal) to make sure they get the whole dose. They will even lick the medicine bottle when it is time to take their medicine.

My cat is very fussy and I have to use transdermal medications when possible. She is on methimazole (for hyperthyroidism), which has been tested and works very well on cats. Other times she has taken the flavored chew tabs without any trauma. It is a pleasure to keep them well and help them recover more quickly because they are compliant.

Anything else you'd like to add about compounding medicines?

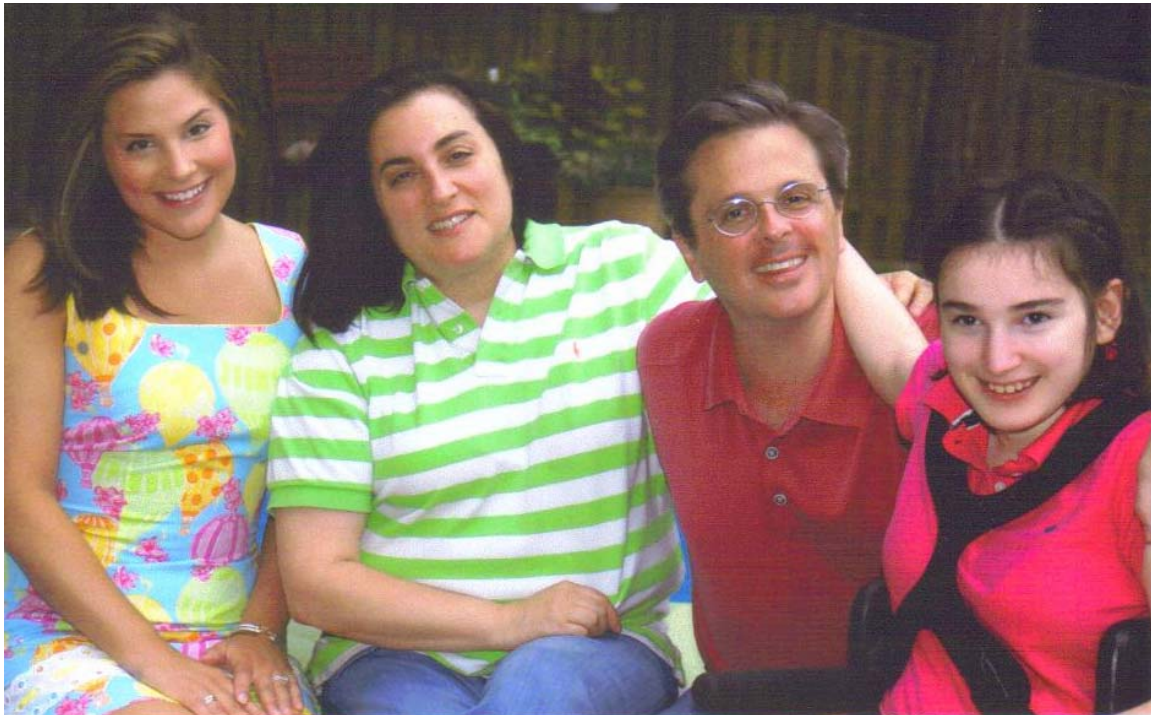
KK – There is a definite need for compounded medications with humans, as well as animals. Used properly and compounded by a properly trained pharmacist, they can be a life saver. Always discuss this option with your doctor or veterinarian to get their perspective. If they have any questions, encourage them to call us at 1-888-260-0801 for more information about this age old art.

And before we go, how about an update on your daughters?

KK – My daughters are doing wonderfully, thank you for asking. Sarah is 21 and in her senior year of College majoring in communications. She is a bright, intelligent, articulate young lady who has learned many of life's lessons from life at home. She is kind and caring of those less fortunate than herself, and always doing philanthropy – projects with her sorority at school and charitable good works at home. I couldn't be prouder of her.



Hadley is 17 and although she only walks a little and talks a little, she is a ray of sun shine in everybody's life she touches. She is eternally happy. She cannot grasp concepts like greed and ugliness and the pull of money; I look at this as a blessing. I wish everybody had her wonderful outlook on the world. For all the operations she has been through, all the therapy she gets daily, she always has a smile on her face and her arms outstretched to give you a hug. I often wonder which of my daughters – both so different – is truly happier. A philosophical question I don't think I will ever find the answer to.



If you'd like to learn more about individualizing treatment to your Fido and compounding pet medicine, visit Center Pet Pharmacy at

<http://www.centerpetpharmacy.com/>.



And if you're also raising a special needs child, visit Shelley Kramm's blog to gain inspiration and insight from her amazing journey raising two incredible daughters, including her now 17-year old special needs girl: <http://iamstillstandingafterallthistime.blogspot.com/>.



When you visit Shelley's blog, be prepared to be smile, laugh, and cry a little as she takes you inside an amazing and ongoing story of love, hope, and conquering the odds with joy, grace, and determination.