

Mexiletine

- Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again.
- Please ask your vet or veterinary nurse if you have any further questions.
- This medicine has been prescribed for your pet ONLY. Do not take it yourself or give it to another person or any other animal; it may harm them even if their symptoms appear to be the same.

The medicine you have been given for your dog or cat is called mexiletine. It may have a trade name such as Mexitil or Ritalmex, but often will just be called mexiletine.

What is mexiletine?

Mexiletine belongs to a group of drugs called antiarrhythmic agents, which help to control abnormal heart rhythms.

Why has my pet been prescribed mexiletine?

Vets use mexiletine most commonly to manage serious and potentially life-threatening abnormal heart rhythms, mainly in dogs.

How should I store mexiletine?

Mexiletine has no special storage requirements. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

How do I give mexiletine tablets or liquid to my pet?

Try to disguise the tablets in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, the tablets can be placed carefully on the back of your pet's tongue and their mouth held closed until the entire dose has been swallowed. The solution can be gently squirted behind the large canine tooth with the pet's mouth held firmly closed. Ensure that plenty of fresh water is available.

How long will my pet need to take mexiletine?

Your vet will tell you how long you need to administer mexiletine for. This may vary between patients.

What should I do if I run out of mexiletine?

Try to avoid running out of mexiletine. If you run out of medication, you should contact your vet, who has a good understanding of your pet's conditions and the reasons for prescribing mexiletine.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose, you can either give the dose straight away and re-establish the correct dosing intervals or wait until the next dose is due. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed dose and do not exceed the stated dose in any one 24-hour period.

What should I do if my pet is accidentally given too many doses?

Contact your vet immediately for advice. An overdose can cause abnormal heart rhythms to develop.

Can my pet take mexiletine if I am already giving them other medications?

Tell your vet if you are giving your pet other medications. This includes herbal or off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop, pharmacy or health store.

What are the possible side effects of mexiletine for my pet?

Administer with food to reduce the risk of gastrointestinal side effects, which can include nausea, poor appetite and vomiting. Other side effects include tremors, low heart rate, low blood pressure and liver damage.

What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking mexiletine?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, you should stop the medication and contact your vet as soon as possible.

What should I do if a person accidentally takes this medication?

If a person accidentally takes your pet's tablets, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets plus their container (even if it is empty) with you

Whom do I contact if I want to know more?

If you have any questions about this drug or concerns about your pet's health, contact your own vet. They will know your pet's medical history and further information on mexiletine.

The Prescribing Cascade

This medicine is authorized for use in human patients and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. The medicine is not authorized by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), for use in dogs/cats/pets. Your vet can explain the 'prescribing cascade' in further detail to you and also explain why they are prescribing this drug for your pet. You will be asked to sign a consent form stating that you understand the reasons that the drug is being prescribed and its possible complications, before the treatment is issued.

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