

# Bethanechol chloride

- 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 bethanechol chloride. It may have a trade name such as Myotonine, but often will just be called bethanechol chloride.

## What is bethanechol chloride?

Bethanechol chloride belongs to a class of drugs called cholinergics and acts on bladder wall muscle to increase the strength of contraction (thereby assisting with bladder emptying).

## Why has my pet been prescribed bethanechol chloride?

Bethanechol chloride is used in cats and dogs that have problems emptying their bladder due to poor bladder muscle tone ('atony'). This may occur following a period of chronic bladder distension. It must only be given once any obstruction to urine flow (physical or mechanical urethral obstruction) has been relieved – this is sometimes achieved with concurrent medication such as urethral relaxants. The nerve supply to the bladder must be intact for it to work.

## How should I store bethanechol chloride?

Store at room temperature and keep away from light. For safety, **all medication should be kept out of the reach and sight of children**. Return any unused or leftover medication to your vet practice for safe disposal.

## How do I give bethanechol chloride tablets to my pet?

Bethanechol chloride is most commonly given without food. Place the tablet on the back of your pet's tongue with their mouth closed until it has been swallowed. Alternatively, give the tablet in a small amount of food (e.g. if it causes vomiting when given on an empty stomach).

## How long will my pet need to take bethanechol chloride?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medication. This may vary between patients.

## What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more medication from your vet if your supply is getting low. If you do run out, contact your vet for further advice and restart the course as soon as possible.

## What should I do if I miss a dose?

If a dose is missed, give the medication as soon as possible. However, it is best to skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your pet's next

scheduled dose. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed dose and do not exceed the total 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** if your pet receives an overdose. Signs of an overdose can include vomiting, diarrhoea, anorexia, salivation or occasionally breathing difficulty.

## Can my pet take bethanechol chloride if I am already giving them other drugs?

Tell your vet if you are giving your pet any other medications (including herbal or off-the-shelf remedies), even if you think they already know.

## What are the possible side effects of bethanechol chloride for my pet?

Vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, anorexia, salivation and, less commonly, slow heart rate or respiratory effects (more likely with overdose). Bethanechol chloride should not be used in pets with a recent history of bladder or intestinal surgery, since they may be at risk of bladder or intestinal rupture.

## What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking bethanechol chloride?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, you should not give any further doses and should contact your vet as soon as possible for advice.

## What should I do if a person accidentally takes this drug?

If a person accidentally takes your pet's tablets, contact a doctor or urgent health care provider **immediately**. Keep this leaflet and any remaining tablets plus their container (even if it is empty) to show them if needed.

## 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 please contact your own vet. They will know your pet's medical history and will know about bethanechol chloride.

### 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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