



Medicine series

Practice details

Diltiazem

- 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 diltiazem. It may have a specific trade name but often will just be called diltiazem.

What is diltiazem?

Diltiazem is a calcium channel blocker which can slow the electrical activity of the heart.

Why has my pet been prescribed diltiazem?

Vets use diltiazem most commonly to manage abnormal heart rhythms and high blood pressure.

How should I store diltiazem?

Diltiazem should be stored at room temperature in tight, light-resistant containers. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

How do I give diltiazem tablets to my pet?

The easiest way to give the tablets is to disguise them 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.

How long will my pet need to take diltiazem?

Your vet will tell you how long you need to administer the diltiazem for. This medication is often used long term.

What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try and avoid running out of diltiazem. 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 diltiazem.

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 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 for advice. Overdoses can cause fatal heart rhythms.

Can my pet take diltiazem 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 diltiazem for my pet?

Diltiazem can cause lethargy and vomiting. Other side effects are uncommon.

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

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 medicine, they should go to a local hospital or contact their doctor **immediately**. This leaflet along with any remaining medication and its container (even if it is empty) should be taken with them.

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 diltiazem.

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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