



Medicine series

Practice details

Vitamin K1

- 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 vitamin K1. It may have a trade name such as Konakion®, but often will just be called vitamin K1 (or phytonadione).

What is vitamin K1?

Vitamin K1 is a fat-soluble vitamin that is required by the body to produce factors involved in normal blood clotting. It is also required for normal calcification of bones. A vitamin K1 deficiency causes a significant delay in blood clotting and the risk of uncontrolled bleeding.

Why has my pet been prescribed vitamin K1?

Vitamin K1 supplementation is given to dogs and cats with certain forms of liver and gall bladder disease that can lead to a lack of vitamin K1 and blood clotting factors. It is also used to treat cases of poisoning with warfarin or coumarin. Patients that have not eaten for prolonged periods may also benefit from vitamin K1 supplementation. There are no stores of vitamin K1 in the body, so it is essential to absorb the vitamin regularly from food in the gut to maintain adequate body levels.

How should I store vitamin K1?

This medicine does not require special storage conditions. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

How do I give vitamin K1 tablets to my pet?

Vitamin K1 is best given with food, preferably with food that has a high fat content. Try to disguise the tablets in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, they 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 vitamin K1?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. 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 tablets from your vet if your supply is getting low. If you do run out, contact your own 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 dog or cat is given an overdose of vitamin K1. An overdose in cats can cause destruction of their red blood cells and this can be life-threatening. Limited information is available regarding overdose of vitamin K1 in dogs.

Can my pet take vitamin K1 if I am already giving them other drugs?

Tell your vet if you are giving your pet any other medications, even if you think they already know. This includes herbal or off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop, pharmacy or health store. Do not give your pet vitamin K1 if they are already taking chloramphenicol, metronidazole or erythromycin (antibiotics), aspirin, allopurinol (used to treat bladder stones), diazoxide (used to manage abnormal blood sugar levels), itraconazole, cimetidine (used to prevent or treat stomach ulcers), propranolol (used in heart conditions), warfarin-type drugs or thyroid drugs. Mineral oil, such as liquid paraffin, will reduce the absorption of vitamin K1 from the gut. If you have any concerns about using vitamin K1 with other medications, please ask your vet for further advice.

What are the possible side effects of vitamin K1 for my pet?

There is limited information available about the side effects of vitamin K1 supplementation in dogs and cats. If your pet shows *any* unusual symptoms whilst taking this medication, please contact your vet.

What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking vitamin K1?

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?

As vitamin K supplements are commonly used for humans, immediate medical attention is not usually necessary. However, individuals should contact their GP for further information. If advised to go to the local hospital, this leaflet along with any remaining tablets and the container (even if it is empty) should be taken with them. ▶

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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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 will know about vitamin K1.

