



Medicine series

Practice details

# Cyproheptadine

- 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 cyproheptadine. It may have a trade name such as Periactin®, but often will just be called cyproheptadine.

## What is cyproheptadine?

Cyproheptadine is an antihistamine medication used to manage allergic disease as well as to stimulate appetite. It also blocks the action of serotonin, which is a natural substance in the brain involved in the regulation of mood, anxiety, sleep, appetite and energy levels.

## Why has my pet been prescribed cyproheptadine?

In dogs and cats, cyproheptadine is often used as an appetite stimulant. It is also used for the management of allergic diseases such as asthma and atopic dermatitis (itchy skin). In cats, it may be used in the treatment of a condition called aortic thromboembolism, where a blood clot lodges in the main artery and reduces blood flow to the hind limbs.

## How should I store cyproheptadine?

This medicine does not require any special storage conditions. Store in a cool, dry place. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

## How do I give cyproheptadine tablets to my pet?

This medicine may be given either with or without food. The tablets may be disguised in a small amount 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 closed until the entire dose has been swallowed. Treatment should be given as directed by your vet but is often given as an oral treatment two to three times a day.

## How long will my pet need to take cyproheptadine?

The duration of administration depends on the condition being treated, the response to medication and the development of any adverse side effects. Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients and can be for the rest of their life.

## 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 and continue the regular schedule. **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 an overdose is given. The most common side effects with an overdose are lethargy, excitement, widened pupils and, in some cases, seizures.

## Can my pet take cyproheptadine 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 and off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop, pharmacy or health store. This drug interacts with a wide range of medications and your vet will advise you on the safety of giving your pet multiple medications accordingly. In particular, caution should be taken when giving cyproheptadine with anti-anxiety medications or sedatives, as it may increase their strength. Caution should be taken if your animal is taking any medication for glaucoma, difficulty urinating, seizures, high blood pressure, hyperthyroidism, cardiovascular disease and certain intestinal obstructions, as cyproheptadine can make these conditions worse in some cases.

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

The full effectiveness of this medication in dogs and cats is not yet known. The most common side effects are drowsiness, mild sedation, increased appetite and weight gain. This medication may also cause excitement, widened pupils and can reduce the threshold for seizures, making them more likely.

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

If your pet is unwell while receiving this medication, you should not give any further doses and should contact your vet immediately for advice. ▶

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

If a person 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 any concerns with your pet's health, then contact your own vet. They will know your pet's medical history and will know about cyproheptadine.