

Misoprostol

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

What is misoprostol?

Misoprostol belongs to a group of medicines called prostaglandin analogues. These drugs act in the stomach and duodenum (the first part of the upper small intestine) to prevent or help heal ulcers. These drugs reduce gastric acid secretion, increase secretion of bicarbonate (to neutralize gastric acid), increase blood flow to the stomach lining and increase the production of mucus, which forms a protective barrier over the lining of the gut.

Why has my pet been prescribed misoprostol?

Misoprostol is used to prevent or treat ulcers in the stomach and upper small intestine. These ulcers can be a side effect of a group of pain-relieving drugs called non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) or a result of several conditions such as kidney failure or stomach cancer. Misoprostol is particularly useful for the prevention and treatment of ulcers associated with NSAIDs. It can also be used in combination with aglepristone to induce abortion in dogs and cats.

How should I store misoprostol?

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 misoprostol tablets to my pet?

Try to disguise the tablets 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 held closed until the entire dose has been swallowed. **People who are or might be pregnant should not handle this drug.**

How long will my pet need to take misoprostol?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients. Any unused misoprostol should be returned to your vet for disposal.

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 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 an overdose is given. Information regarding misoprostol overdose in pets is limited. However, in people it can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, drowsiness, tremor, fits, difficulty breathing, fever, low blood pressure and an irregular heartbeat.

Can my pet take misoprostol 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 misoprostol to your pet if they are already taking gentamicin (an antibiotic).

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

Misoprostol can cause vomiting, diarrhoea and abdominal pain (which may cause your pet to look hunched and uncomfortable). These side effects are usually temporary and should stop after a few days. Giving the tablets with a small amount of food may help reduce these signs. **Misoprostol can cause abortion in pregnant animals.** 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 misoprostol?

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.

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.

While the editors and the BSAVA have made every effort in preparing this information leaflet, the contents and any statements are made in good faith purely for general guidance and cannot be regarded as substitute for professional advice. The publishers, contributors and the BSAVA do not take responsibility for the information provided on this leaflet and hence do not accept any liability for loss or expense incurred (by you or persons that you disseminate the materials to) as a result of relying on content in this leaflet. To this end, you are advised to consult your vet and seek their professional advice before taking any steps set out in this leaflet. If you are a vet, you must not rely on the contents in this leaflet without independently verifying the correctness and veracity of the contents. BSAVA is not responsible for any alterations made to this document from the version supplied.

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

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 will know about misoprostol.