



Medicine series

Practice details

# Diazoxide

- 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 is called diazoxide. It may have a trade name such as Eudemine®, but often will just be called diazoxide.

## What is diazoxide?

Diazoxide belongs to a group of medicines that are called vasodilator diuretics. In people these drugs are used to treat hypertension (abnormally high blood pressure) by widening blood vessels and increasing the production of urine to remove excess fluid from the body. In addition, diazoxide inhibits the secretion of insulin from the cells of the pancreas that produce it. Insulin acts to lower blood sugar levels by driving the sugar into the cells of the body, enabling them to use it for energy. By reducing insulin output from the pancreas, diazoxide can be used to increase blood sugar levels.

## Why has my pet been prescribed diazoxide?

Diazoxide is used in veterinary patients to treat conditions that cause abnormally low blood sugar levels. These include insulinoma, a type of tumour that produces excessive amounts of insulin.

## How should I store diazoxide?

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 diazoxide tablets to my pet?

Try to disguise them in a 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 diazoxide?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients. The therapeutic effects of diazoxide are known to diminish over time (several months) and this loss of effectiveness may require the dose to be increased.

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

Try not to run out of tablets. 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 pet is given an overdose of diazoxide. In people, an overdose of diazoxide can cause unsteadiness, increased thirst and frequency of urination, and vomiting.

## Can my pet take diazoxide 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. Other diuretics (drugs that remove excess fluid from the body by increasing urine production) such as phenothiazines and thiazides should be avoided if at all possible when your pet is taking diazoxide. Do not give your pet diazoxide if they are already taking phenoxybenzamine or other alpha-adrenergic blocking agents (used to treat urethral spasm).

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

Diazoxide can cause a loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhoea. Less common side effects include hypotension (low blood pressure) that can result in general weakness, inactivity and a rapid heartbeat. More rarely, inflammation of the pancreas can occur, which causes abdominal pain (your pet may appear hunched and very uncomfortable). Cataracts can develop. Fluid retention can cause coughing or an enlarged abdomen. On occasion, diazoxide can suppress the production of blood cells by bone marrow. This can be monitored by regular blood tests. 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 diazoxide?

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.

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### **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 diazoxide.