

# Trimethoprim/sulphonamide

- 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 a potentiated sulphonamide and may be called trimethoprim/sulphonamide, trimethoprim/sulfadiazine or trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole. It may have a trade name, but often will just be called trimethoprim/sulphonamide.

## What is trimethoprim/sulphonamide?

Trimethoprim and sulphonamides are antibiotic medications that block the synthesis of bacterial folic acid. Together, they are called potentiated sulphonamides as they block different steps. This decreases the likelihood of antibiotic resistance developing.

## Why has my pet been prescribed trimethoprim/sulphonamide?

Potentiated sulphonamides are used to treat infections of the respiratory tract, skin and urinary tract. Infections at other sites caused by susceptible organisms may also be treated. Potentiated sulphonamides are considered first-line antibiotics and should be used instead of critically important antibiotics that are normally reserved for use in people.

## How should I store trimethoprim/sulphonamide?

Trimethoprim/sulphonamide has no special storage requirements. It should not be stored in the fridge. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

## How do I give trimethoprim/sulphonamide to my pet?

The medication is available as tablets and as a liquid suspension. The medication should be given by mouth. Try to disguise the tablets in a strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, it 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 trimethoprim/sulphonamide?

Your vet will tell you how long you need to administer the medication for. Usually this medication is used to provide short-term treatment of infectious conditions. Any unused medication should be returned to your vet for safe disposal. Do not flush down the toilet or put into your household waste.

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

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 trimethoprim/sulphonamide.

## 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 gastrointestinal signs.

## Can my pet take trimethoprim/sulphonamide if I am already giving them other drugs?

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 trimethoprim/sulphonamide for my pet?

Trimethoprim/sulphonamide can cause fever (a high temperature), dry eye (decreased tear production) and liver damage, and (rarely) can provoke an allergic reaction causing joint pain or decreased numbers of red blood cells or platelets. Certain breeds of dog (e.g. Doberman) are particularly sensitive to this medication.

## What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking trimethoprim/sulphonamide?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, please contact your vet as soon as possible.

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

This medication is used in humans. However, if a person accidentally takes the medication, you should go to a local hospital or contact a local doctor **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets/capsules plus their container (even if it is empty) with you.

## 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 want to know more about this medication you should contact your vet, who has a good understanding of your pet's conditions and the reasons for prescribing trimethoprim/sulphonamide.