



Medicine series

Practice details

Itraconazole

- 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 itraconazole. It may have a trade name such as Sporanox® or Itrafungol®, but often will just be called itraconazole.

What is itraconazole?

Itraconazole belongs to a group of medicines that are called triazole antifungals. These drugs are used to treat fungal infections.

Why has my pet been prescribed itraconazole?

Itraconazole is used to treat a range of internal and external fungal infections in veterinary patients. These include dermatophytosis (a fungal skin infection also known as 'ringworm'), aspergillosis (a fungal infection that can affect the nasal passages of dogs), candidiasis (a yeast infection, sometimes found in ears and on the skin) and fungal infections affecting the lungs. The oral solution of itraconazole can be used to treat a particular type of ringworm infection in cats (including Persians) without the need to clip their coats.

How should I store itraconazole?

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 itraconazole tablets or oral solution to my pet?

Try to disguise the itraconazole in a small quantity of 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 itraconazole?

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 or solution?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more itraconazole 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 if your pet is given an overdose of itraconazole. There is limited information available regarding itraconazole overdose in dogs and cats, but an overdose in people tends to produce the side effects listed for pets below.

Can my pet take itraconazole 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 itraconazole if they are already taking antihistamines (used to treat allergies and some skin conditions), drugs used to control epilepsy, ciclosporin (used in atopy, a common allergic skin condition) or digoxin (used to treat some heart conditions). Itraconazole should be given at least 2 hours before any drugs used to prevent or treat stomach ulcers, such as antacids and proton pump inhibitors. If you have any concerns about using itraconazole with other medications, please ask your vet for further advice.

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

Itraconazole can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, salivation, depression and inactivity, abdominal pain (your pet may look hunched and uncomfortable), skin reactions and swelling of limbs. There is a risk of liver damage and it is, therefore, advisable to watch your pet for signs such as increased drinking, general fatigue or yellow colouration in the eyes. Your vet may also want to carry out 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 itraconazole?

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 medicine, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets or solution 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 itraconazole.