

Chlorambucil

Leukeran is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

Chlorambucil is a potent drug used to treat certain kinds of cancer. It is also used to suppress the immune system in conditions where this effect is desirable.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?

- Chlorambucil depresses the function of the bone marrow and should be used with extreme caution in patients who already have bone marrow depression or infection.
- Chlorambucil is known to cause birth defects and should generally not be used in pregnancy. This drug is used to treat life-threatening conditions, however, and you and your veterinarian may decide that use during pregnancy is necessary to save the life of the mother.
- Chlorambucil should not be used in males intended for breeding as permanent infertility may result.
- If your animal has any of the above conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks of using the medication versus the benefits that it might have.

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?

- Chlorambucil most commonly causes bone marrow depression which results in anemias and bleeding disorders. These side effects usually occur about one to two weeks after starting therapy with chlorambucil. If your animal experiences any bruising, bleeding, lethargy (lacking energy), infection or difficulty breathing, you should notify your veterinarian immediately.
- Some breeds of dogs are likely to lose their haircoat after treatment with chlorambucil. Poodles and Kerry Blues are more likely to suffer this effect.
- Liver failure has been reported after use of chlorambucil.
- Breathing problems and gout have also been reported after using chlorambucil.
- Like many chemotherapy drugs, chlorambucil should not be used in pregnant or nursing dogs or cats, or in male pets to be used for breeding.

How Should It Be Given?

- Chlorambucil can also cause side effects in the owner if not handled properly. You should always wear gloves when handling this medication and children should never be allowed to handle this drug.
- The successful outcome of your animal's treatment with this medication depends upon your commitment and ability to administer it exactly as the veterinarian has prescribed. Please do not skip doses or stop giving the medication. If you have difficulty giving doses consult your veterinarian or pharmacist who can offer administration techniques or change the dosage form to a type of medication that may be more acceptable to you and your animal.
- If you miss a dose of this medication you should give it as soon as you remember it, but if it is within a few hours of the regularly scheduled dose, wait and give it at the regular time. Do not double a dose as this can be toxic to your pet.
- Some other drugs can interact with this medication so tell your veterinarian about any drugs or foods that you currently give your animal. Do not give new foods or medications without first asking your veterinarian. Modified Live vaccines should never be given to any animal on cancer chemotherapy.
- Dogs and Cats: Dogs and cats usually receive this drug orally once every day or every other day to suppress the immune system. For treating cancer, chlorambucil is administered every day to every other day or every 2-3 weeks.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Chlorambucil should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container in the refrigerator out of the reach of all children and other household pets. Chlorambucil has a sugar coating on the outside which may make it more appealing to pets and children.
- You should always wear gloves when handling this medication. Children and pregnant women should not come into contact with this drug at all.
- For 48 hours after each dose, you should avoid all contact with your pet's urine, feces, saliva or vomit as there may be enough chlorambucil in these bodily byproducts to cause harm to the owner.