

# Bismuth Subsalicylate

Pepto Bismol®, Bismusal®, Bismukote®, and Corrective Mixture are other names for this medication.

## How Is This Medication Useful?

Bismuth subsalicylate is used to treat diarrhea in animals and may also be used as part of a multi-drug therapy to get rid of a gastrointestinal bacteria called *Helicobacter*.

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

- Because salicylate is in the same family as aspirin, bismuth subsalicylate should not be used in patients who are allergic to or sensitive to aspirin.
- Bismuth subsalicylate should not be used in patients who have bleeding problems.
- Because cats are very sensitive to aspirin and can easily die from overdoses, this drug should probably not be used in cats.
- This drug may cause gastrointestinal obstruction in some patients.
- This drug should not be used at the same time as aspirin due to the increased risk of adverse effects.
- Bismuth subsalicylate can inactivate many drugs and should not be given within 2 hours of any other drug.
- Bismuth subsalicylate can cause false results in urine glucose testing and glucose fluctuations may need to be monitored by blood testing while on salicylates.
- Bismuth subsalicylate will interfere with the accuracy of gastrointestinal x-rays. Tablets may show up as “foreign bodies” in the intestinal tract.
- 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?

- Bismuth subsalicylate may result in constipation.
- The salicylate component of bismuth subsalicylate may be absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract and cause bleeding problems.

## How Should It Be Given?

- Shake this medication very well prior to administering.
- 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. You should not give any other drugs within two hours of this medication unless otherwise instructed by your veterinarian.
- Dogs and Cats: Dogs and cats usually receive this drug up to three times daily orally for treating diarrhea and an infection called *Helicobacter*.

## What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Bismuth subsalicylate should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- Bismuth subsalicylate suspensions should be shaken well prior to use to ensure that adequate doses of medication are given.

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### References:

*Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook*