

Cimetidine

Tagamet® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- Cimetidine is used to decrease acid secretion in the stomach and help treat and protect against the formation of ulcers. Cimetidine was the first drug of its kind to reach the market, but its use in veterinary medicine has diminished in recent years. Drugs such as ranitidine or famotidine have fewer drug interactions and dosing is required less often than with cimetidine.
- There is also limited evidence that cimetidine may help slow progression of advanced melanosarcoma.

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

- Cimetidine should be used carefully in animals with blood abnormalities.
- Cimetidine should also be used carefully in animals with liver and kidney disease as the drug is removed from the body by these organs and may accumulate if these organs are not working properly.
- Use cimetidine carefully in older animals.
- Cimetidine can significantly reduce an animal's ability to eliminate several other drugs from the body. Tell your veterinarian about any other drugs you are giving your pet and do not give new drugs without first asking your veterinarian.
- 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?

- There are few side effects associated with cimetidine in animals, but if your animal shows something abnormal, contact your veterinarian.

How Should It Be Given?

- Preferably cimetidine should be given on an empty stomach as giving with food will cause acid secretion before the drug starts to work. However, it is better to give the medication than not to, regardless of feeding status.
- 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, change the dosage form or find an alternative 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.
- There are many drugs that can interact with cimetidine. Tell your veterinarian about any drugs or foods that you currently give your animal and do not give new foods or medications without first asking your veterinarian.
- Dogs and Cats: Dogs and cats usually receive this drug three to four times a day.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Cimetidine tablets and oral liquid should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- Keep cimetidine products at room temperature.
- Cats particularly do not like the taste of cimetidine liquid and may drool excessively after this medication is given. You can ask your pharmacist about compounding capsules or specially flavored liquids that will make it easier to get your cat to take cimetidine.

References:

Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook