

Ketoconazole

Nizoral® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- Ketoconazole is a medication that is used to treat fungal (yeast) infections in and on the body, including ringworm.
- Now that safer drugs such as itraconazole and fluconazole are available, ketoconazole is rarely used for routine fungal infection. It is still used to reduce dose of cyclosporine or occasionally to treat Cushing's disease.

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

- Ketoconazole should not be used in patients that are allergic to it or are allergic to other antifungal agents in the same class.
- It should not be used in patients with liver problems as it can worsen this condition.
- Ketoconazole is removed from the body by the kidneys and should be used very carefully in animals with kidney failure.
- It is probably not safe to use Ketoconazole in pregnancy, but you should discuss this with your veterinarian if it will save the life of a pregnant animal.
- 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?

- Ketoconazole may sometimes cause liver problems, so your veterinarian may ask you to return to the clinic for liver function tests if your animal is taking this medication.

How Should It Be Given?

- ketoconazole can be given with or without food and is usually given orally twice daily.
- 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.
- Treatment may last for weeks to months or even lifelong, as the medication must be given until weeks to months after infection is cleared, and it can take many months to clear fungal infections from the body. When used for Cushing's disease, treatment is generally lifelong, as long as tolerated.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Ketoconazole should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- Oral liquids of ketoconazole should be stored in the refrigerator, shaken well and discarded after the expiration date on the container, usually 14-30 days.

References:

Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook