

# Amantadine

Adekin®, Amanta®, Amantagamma®, Amantan®, Amantrel®, Amixx®, Antadine®, Antiflu-DES®, Atarin®, Atenegine®, Cerebramed®, Endantadine®, Infectoflu®, Influa-A®, Lysovir®, Mantadine®, Mantadix®, Mantidan®, Padiken®, Symadine®, Symmetrel®, Viroifral® and Virucid® are other names for this medication.

## How Is This Medication Useful?

Amantadine is used in dogs to treat canine flu, and to treat chronic pain in dogs and cats.

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

In some dogs, amantadine can cause gastrointestinal upset, dry mouth or agitation, especially when it is first administered. These side effects, if mild, may subside with time.

Amantadine should not be given to dogs or cats known to be allergic to it, nor to pets known to have narrow angle glaucoma, a disorder of the eye that causes enlarged eyes, red eyes, cloudy corneas and blindness.

Amantadine should be used with caution in animals with kidney disease, liver disease, congestive heart failure, some forms of allergic skin disease, seizures, and some behavior disorders.

Speak with your veterinarian if your dog is taking any of the following medications, as amantadine can interact with these medications. Any of these medications can be given with amantadine under the proper circumstances, but benefits and potential side effects should be carefully considered.

- Anticholinergic drugs such as atropine, and glycopyrrolate
- Selegiline (Anipryl®, Deprenyl®) and other drugs that stimulate the brain
- sulfa drugs
- quinine and quinidine
- thiazide diuretics
- triamterene
- urinary acidifiers such as methionine, ammonium chloride, or vitamin C may reduce effectiveness of amantadine because they cause the drug to be eliminated more rapidly in the urine.

This drug has what is called a very narrow therapeutic index. This means the dose range is narrow, and care must be taken not to overdose. Side effects from overdose can be serious. The medications may need to be specially prepared in exact doses for small dogs, by a compounding pharmacist.

It is not known if amantadine is safe to give pregnant, lactating or breeding dogs or cats. Amantadine has caused an adverse effect on fetuses in preliminary studies, and it is passed from the nursing mother to offspring in the milk. Talk to your veterinarian before using this drug in dogs and cats used for breeding.

## What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?

Amantadine can cause agitation, diarrhea and flatulence in some dogs. Amantadine use has not been well studied in cats, but some think gastrointestinal side effects are more common in cats than in dogs.

Toxic dose reported for cats is 30 mg/kg (6-10x the usual dose) and behavioral effects may be noted at 15 mg/kg in dogs and cats (3-5x the usual dose). Symptoms of overdose could include tremors, anxiety, poor coordination, excessive salivation, vomiting, rapid heart rate, high blood pressure, abnormal heartbeat, difficulty breathing and seizures. There is no known antidote for amantadine overdose, but in case of overdose, your vet can provide routine treatments for overdose, such as pumping the stomach, giving activated charcoal to prevent absorption of the drug, and administration of IV fluids.

Immediately contact your veterinarian if your pet shows any of these problems.

## **How Should It Be Given?**

Amantadine is most often administered in combination with other pain meds for chronic pain, once or twice a day. It can take a week or more for pain control effects to be evident.

In 2006, the FDA banned the use of amantadine in chickens, turkeys and ducks.

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 without talking to your vet. 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.

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.

If you are giving this drug every day and you miss a dose of this medication, you should give it either as soon as you remember or with the next dose. Do not double a dose, as this can be toxic to your pet.

## **What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?**

Keep the tablets stored in the original prescription vial at room temperature; do not expose them to high heat or freezing.

Keep this medication away from children.

### ***References:***

Plumb Veterinary Drug Handbook.

Wendy Blount, DVM - PracticalVetMed