

Clopidogrel

Plavix® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- Clopidogrel is used to prevent blood clot formation, and to treat blood clots.
- Cats with aortic clots have improved survival with clopidogrel therapy as compared to aspirin therapy.
- Clopidogrel may also improve circulation in the rear legs after blood clot in the aorta and femoral arteries.
- At least 3 days are required for this drug to take full effect. Once the drug is stopped, effects wear off in about 1 week.
- Clopidogrel appears safe to use with heparin (both unfractionated and LMW).

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

- Clopidogrel should not be given to patients who are actively bleeding. Bleeding is not a likely side effect, but it can occur.
- If your animal has any problems while taking clopidogrel, 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?

- Clopidogrel is usually well tolerated by cats, though some may develop a poor appetite, or have vomiting or diarrhea. Giving the drug with food might help resolve these side effects
- Anemia due to bone marrow suppression has report in some cats taking clopidogrel long term. Symptoms of anemia might include poor energy, lethargy, and pale tongue and gum color.
- Clopidogrel is probably safe for use in pregnant and nursing dogs and cats, if used cautiously.
- 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.
 - **Aspirin:** Increased risk for bleeding, however many human patients take both medications.
 - **Cimetidine:** May decrease the effects of clopidogrel.
 - **Cyclosporine:** clopidogrel can increase cyclosporine peak levels in dogs.
 - **NSAIDs:** Increased risk for bleeding; clopidogrel may interfere with metabolism of NSIADs such as carprofen, deracoxib, firocoxib, etc.
 - **Phenytoin:** Clopidogrel may interfere with metabolism of phenytoin.
 - **Proton Pump Inhibitors (e.g., omeprazole):** may decrease the efficacy of clopidogrel.
 - **Rifampin:** May increase the effects of clopidogrel.
 - **Torsemide:** Clopidogrel may interfere with metabolism of the diuretic torsemide.
 - **Warfarin:** Increased risk for bleeding; clopidogrel may interfere with metabolism.

How Should It Be Given?

- Clopidogrel can be given with or without food.
- 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.
- Dogs and cats usually take this drug once daily.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Clopidogrel should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.

References:

Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook