

Meclizine

Meclozine, meclizinium, parachloramine, Antivert®, and Bonine® are other names for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

☐ Meclizine is an antihistamine used in small animals to treat vomiting, especially when caused by motion sickness or vestibular disease. It can also relieve gastrointestinal spasms.

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

- ☐ Meclizine should not be given to patients hypersensitive to it.
- ☐ Meclizine should be used with caution in animals with prostatic hyperplasia, bladder neck obstruction, severe cardiac failure, angle-closure glaucoma, or gastrointestinal obstruction.
- ☐ 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?

- ☐ Meclizine can sometimes cause drowsiness – the most frequent side effect.
- ☐ Less frequently, it may cause dry gums and eyes, or fast heart rate.
- ☐ Agitation or excitement is possible.
- ☐ Cats may develop poor appetite when taking this medication.
- ☐ Meclizine can cause birth defects such as cleft palate in laboratory animals at a dose 25-50 times higher than labeled dosages. However, in humans, it has been suggested that meclizine possesses the lowest risk for birth defects of all the antiemetic drugs and that it is the drug of first choice to treat nausea/vomiting associated with pregnancy. Adequate studies in pregnant women have not demonstrated a risk to the fetus in the first trimester of pregnancy, and there is no evidence of risk in later trimesters. It is unknown if meclizine enters milk, but it may potentially inhibit lactation.
- ☐ Overdosage may result in drowsiness alternating with hyperexcitability. Massive overdoses may result in profound depression, hallucinations, seizures, high heart rate, inability to urinate, etc.
- ☐ Because these drugs are antihistamines, they may affect the results of skin tests using allergen extracts. Do not use for 3-7 days before skin testing.

How Should It Be Given?

- ☐ Meclizine is given to dogs and cats by mouth once 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.
 - **CNS Depressants:** use of meclizine with other nervous system depressants may cause additive sedation.
 - **Anticholinergic Drugs:** use of meclizine with other anticholinergic drugs may cause additive anticholinergic effects, such as dry gums and mouth, high heart rate, etc.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- ☐ Meclizine may be given with or without food. Giving with a small amount of food or a treat may help prevent vomiting.
- ☐ When using to prevent car motion sickness, give meclizine 30-60 minutes before travel.
- ☐ Meclizine should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.

References:

Plumb Veterinary Drug Handbook