

# Sucralfate

Carafate® is another name for this medication.

## How Is This Medication Useful?

Sucralfate is used to coat ulcers in the stomach to protect them from further damage. It is also used to prevent the formation of ulcers. It will coat the ulcer for up to 6 hours after an oral dose.

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

- Sucralfate might worsen constipation and should not be used in conditions where slowing the action of the stomach and intestines could be harmful (e.g., megacolon).
- Sucralfate contains aluminum. Long term use may cause higher levels of aluminum to accumulate and weaken the bones or have an effect on the brain.
- Sucralfate has caused no deformities in pregnant laboratory animals, but until further information is available, it should be used cautiously in pregnant animals.
- Sucralfate binds many drugs in the stomach and prevents them from having an effect. Tell your veterinarian if you are giving your pets any other medications and don't give any medications within 2 hours of sucralfate.
- 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?

Constipation is generally the only side effect seen with sucralfate.

## How Should It Be Given?

- Sucralfate should be given orally up to 4 times daily. If giving the tablets, they should ideally be crushed before administration to give maximum ulcer protection. Liquid forms of sucralfate cover ulcers better than whole tablets.
- 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.
- Dogs and Cats: Dogs and cats usually receive sucralfate as an oral liquid or as crushed tablets 2-4 times daily on an empty stomach. Oral liquids should be shaken well before giving. Other drugs should not be given within 2 hours of sucralfate.
- Sucralfate tablets can be dissolved in water rather than crushing if you wish. It will coat ulcers better if dissolved in water before giving by mouth.

## What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Sucralfate should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- You should watch your animal for continued signs that sucralfate is working. If you see blood in the vomit or stools, you should contact your veterinarian immediately as the ulcers may be getting worse.

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### References:

*Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook*