

Tetracycline

Panmycin® and Sumycin® are other names for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

Tetracycline is used to treat many infections in pets, especially those diseases caused by ticks.

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

- Some animals are allergic to tetracycline. If your animal has shown allergies to any of the tetracycline products, you should tell your veterinarian before you give your pet tetracycline.
- Because animals do not swallow their medications with water, and because their bodies are horizontal instead of vertical, tablets and capsules can sometimes get stuck on their way to the stomach. You should ensure that your pet swallows some water after giving tetracycline.
- You should always give all of the medication as directed by your veterinarian. If the entire course of treatment is not finished, the germ causing the infection may become stronger than the antibiotics and cause a worsening infection.

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?

- Nausea and vomiting are the most common side effects seen with dogs and cats given tetracycline. To reduce these side effects, give each dose with a meal. If your dog or cat experiences severe vomiting or diarrhea, stop giving the tetracycline and contact your veterinarian.
- Tetracycline can also increase the sensitivity of the skin to sunlight. If your pet is light skinned, light furred or has thin fur, you should not let it go out into direct sunlight for more than a few minutes while taking tetracycline. Some sunscreens may be toxic to pets, so you should ask your veterinarian before putting any sunscreen on your animal.

How Should It Be Given?

- Tetracycline is inactivated by iron, milk products and antacids. So don't give these foods or drugs at the same time as tetracycline.
- 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.
- 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 usually receive tetracycline orally twice or three times daily. Cats should be given at least a teaspoonful of water or offered a favorite liquid (not milk) to drink following tablets or capsules.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Pets should be watched carefully if they spend a lot of time in direct sunlight as tetracycline can cause the skin to erupt in pustules and blisters when exposed to sunlight.
 - You should never give your pet "old" (expired) tetracycline as it breaks down to a product that can severely damage the kidneys.
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References:

Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook