

Esomeprazole

Nexium® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- Esomeprazole is used to treat gastrointestinal ulcers and erosions in dogs and cats, though little information on its use in veterinary species is published. It works by reducing acid production by the stomach.
- It is also used to prevent ulcers caused by chronic aspirin therapy.

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

- Esomeprazole should not be given to patients that are hypersensitive to it.
- Dosage may need to be reduced in patients with liver disease.
- 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?

- Esomeprazole is usually well tolerated in dogs and cats, though it can occasionally cause poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, flatulence or diarrhea.
- Abnormal blood counts, urinary tract infections, loss of protein from the kidneys central nervous system disturbances are possible.
- Esomeprazole's safety during pregnancy has not been established, but it is not considered a significant teratogen.

How Should It Be Given?

- Esomeprazole is available in capsules and liquid suspension to be given orally once daily, as well as injectable forms.
- Oral doses should be given on an empty stomach, preferably one hour before 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.
- 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.
 - **Azole antifungals (ketoconazole, itraconazole, etc.):** Esomeprazole can reduce absorption, and azoles potentially can increase esomeprazole exposure.
 - **Benzodiazepines (e.g., diazepam, lorazepam, midazolam, alprazolam, etc.):** Esomeprazole may potentially prolong effects on the brain of benzodiazepines.
 - **Clarithromycin:** Increased levels of esomeprazole and clarithromycin are possible.
 - **Cyanocobalamin (vitamin B12):** Esomeprazole may decrease oral absorption.
 - **Cyclosporine:** Esomeprazole may increase cyclosporine levels in the body.
 - **Digoxin:** Esomeprazole may increase digoxin levels in the body.
 - **Diuretics (loop or thiazides):** Increased risk for low magnesium.
 - **Iron:** Esomeprazole may decrease absorption of oral iron supplements.
 - **Methotrexate:** Esomeprazole may increase and prolong methotrexate levels.
 - **Mycophenolate:** Esomeprazole may reduce mycophenolate levels.

- **Sucralfate:** May inhibit absorption of esomeprazole; stagger dosages.
- **Warfarin:** Esomeprazole may increase anticoagulant (blood thinning) effect.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Esomeprazole capsules and suspensions should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- For using the delayed oral suspension packets: Empty the contents of a 2.5 or 5 mg packet into a container with 5 mL of water; empty the contents of a 10, 20, or 40 mg packet into a container with 15 mL of water. Stir, then leave 2-3 minutes to thicken. Stir and drink within 30 minutes. If any material remains after drinking, add more water, stir, and drink immediately.
- If mixing capsule contents with food, only cold or room temperature applesauce is recommended and administration should occur immediately after mixing.
- Once reconstituted, injectable solutions should be used within 12 hours.

References:

Plumb Veterinary Drug Handbook