

Budesonide

(bue-des-oh-nide)

Category: Glucocorticoid

Other Names for this Medication: Entocort EC®, Uceris®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** 3 & 9 mg capsules. Capsules may be made (compounded) into a smaller size; inhalers and nasal products containing budesonide available, but not commonly used in animals.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication. It is to help answer commonly asked questions and help you give the medication safely and effectively to your animal. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Key Information

- ▶ May be given with or without food. If your pet vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ Do not crush capsules or allow animals to chew them. Do not open capsules unless your veterinarian has instructed you to do so.
- ▶ Once your animal has been taking this drug for a while, do not stop giving it without first checking with your veterinarian. There can be serious withdrawal effects if the medication is stopped suddenly.
- ▶ Side effects are not well understood in animals, but are likely to be associated with steroid effects: Greater appetite, thirst, and need to urinate, lack of energy, weakness, excessive panting (in dogs), changes in skin and hair, weight gain, pot belly. Contact your veterinarian if you see any of these.

How is this medication useful?

When given by mouth, budesonide can be useful in treating inflammatory intestinal conditions in dogs and cats. Budesonide is a glucocorticoid (steroid; like prednisone) and reduces inflammation in the intestines, but not very much gets into the blood, so steroid side effects are reduced. This drug is most commonly used in animals that cannot tolerate the side effects of other oral steroids, like prednisolone.

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in humans, but it is not officially approved for use in animals. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe products containing this drug in different species or for other conditions in certain situations. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this drug is the most appropriate choice.

What should I tell my veterinarian to see if this medication can be safely given?

Many things might affect how well this drug will work in your animal. Be sure to discuss the following with your veterinarian so together you can make the best treatment decisions.

- ▶ Other drugs can interact with budesonide, so be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you give your animal, including the amount and time you give each.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your pet may have now or has had in the past.

- ▶ If your animal has been treated for the same disease or condition in the past, tell your veterinarian about the treatment and how well it did or didn't work.
- ▶ If your animal is pregnant or nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this drug.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian and pharmacist about any medication side effects (including allergic reactions, lack of appetite, diarrhea, itching, hair loss) your pet has developed in the past.

When should this drug not be used or be used very carefully?

No drug is 100% safe in all patients, but your veterinarian will discuss with you any specific concerns about using this drug in your animal.

This drug **SHOULD NOT** be used in patients:

- ▶ That are allergic to it.

This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in patients:

- ▶ That have GI ulcers, diabetes, active infections, or cataracts.

If your pet has any of these conditions or signs, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks versus benefits.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Budesonide has not been used in many dogs or cats, so its side effects are not well known, but it is expected that they would be related to its steroid activity.

Common, but not serious side effects include:

- ▶ Greater appetite, thirst, and need to urinate (in dogs).
- ▶ Lack of energy, weakness, excessive panting (in dogs).
- ▶ Changes in skin and hair/coat, weight gain, pot belly.

Contact your veterinarian if any of these effects progress or worsen.

Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:

- ▶ Lack of an appetite.
- ▶ Persistent vomiting or diarrhea.

If my animal gets too much of this medication (an overdose), what should I do?

Overdoses of budesonide are usually not serious, but massive overdoses may require medical help. If you witness or suspect an overdose, contact your veterinarian or an animal poison control center for further advice. Animal poison control centers that are open 24 hours a day include: ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) and Pet Poison HELPLINE (855-764-7661); a consultation fee is charged for these services.

How should this medication be given?

For this medication to work, give it exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. It's a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.

- ▶ Budesonide may be given either with food or on an empty stomach. If your pet vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ Do not give oral antacids at the same time as budesonide as it might affect the way the drug works.
- ▶ If you have difficulty getting your animal to take the medicine, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help with dosing and reducing the stress of medication time.
- ▶ Patients are usually on this medication for an extended period, often for the rest of their lives. Give this medication according to the label's instructions and obtain refills as needed. Before stopping this medication, talk to your veterinarian, as there may be important reasons to continue its use.

What should I do if I miss giving a dose of this medication?

If you miss a dose, give it when you remember, but if it is close to the time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and give it at the next scheduled time. After that, return to the regular dosing schedule. Do not double-up or give extra doses.

How should I store this medication?

- ▶ Store this medication in the original prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder container (ie, pill minder) at room temperature.
- ▶ If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the storage recommendations and expiration date for the product.
- ▶ Keep away from children and other animals.

Can handling this medication be hazardous to me, my family, or other pets?

There are no specific precautions required when handling this medication unless you are allergic to it. Wash your hands after handling any medication.

How should I dispose of this medication if I don't use it all?

- ▶ Do not flush this medication down the toilet or wash it down the sink. If a community drug "take-back" program is available, use this option. If there is no take-back program, mix the drug with coffee grounds or cat litter (to make it undesirable to children and animals and unrecognizable to people who might go through your trash), place the mixture in a sealable plastic bag to keep it from leaking out, and throw the bag out with the regular trash.
- ▶ Do not save left over medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?

- ▶ Use of this drug may not be allowed in certain animal competitions. Check rules and regulations before entering your animal in a competition while this medication is being administered.
- ▶ If your animal requires surgery or has been injured, be sure to tell the veterinarian that your animal has been taking this medication.

If you have any other questions or concerns about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.