

Glipizide

(glip-i-zide)

Category: Oral Antidiabetic Agent

Other Names for this Medication: Glucotrol®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** 5 mg & 10 mg oral tablets; 2.5 mg, 5 mg, & 10 mg extended-release oral tablet.

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

- ▶ Give with meals; usually twice per day.
- ▶ About 15% of cats will vomit after starting this drug, but this usually gets better after a few days.
- ▶ May take 1-2 months to see if the drug is working.
- ▶ Rarely, glipizide can cause jaundice or blood sugar to be too low (hypoglycemia). Watch for seizures (convulsions), collapse (passing out), rear leg weakness or paralysis, muscle twitching, unsteadiness, lack of energy, or depression.

How is this medication useful?

Glipizide is used in cats to treat non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM).

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 this drug, 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 medication 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 cats:

- ▶ That are allergic to it.
- ▶ With a severe form of diabetes known as, diabetic ketoacidosis (a build-up of acids [ketones] in the body); this condition requires insulin treatment.
- ▶ With low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).
- ▶ That have insulin-resistant diabetes. Glipizide does not work in these cats.

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

- ▶ That are pregnant or nursing.

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

What are the side effects of this medication?

Side effects that usually are not serious include:

- ▶ Lack of appetite, vomiting. Approximately 15% of cats receiving glipizide develop gastrointestinal (GI) side effects when starting the drug. Vomiting usually occurs shortly after dosing and usually gets better after 2-5 days.

You don't have to be overly concerned if you see either of these signs unless they are severe, worsen, or continue to be a problem. Contact your veterinarian if this happens.

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

- ▶ Seizures (convulsions), collapsing/passing out, rear leg weakness or paralysis, wobbling, head tilting, shivering, excessive sleepiness, glassy eyes, confusion, muscle twitching, unsteadiness, or depression. These can all be signs associated with low blood sugar and can be very serious. If you see any of these, immediately rub 1 mL (approximately ¼ teaspoon) of Karo® syrup on the gums.
- ▶ Yellowing of the whites of the eyes, skin, or gums (jaundice) and increases in liver enzymes. This condition occurs in approximately 8% of treated cats. Your veterinarian will watch for these problems at follow-up visits.
- ▶ Lack of an appetite, severe vomiting, or severe lack of energy.
- ▶ Bone marrow depression (very rare). If you see bleeding, bruising, fever (indicating an infection), or if your animal becomes very tired easily.

Contact your veterinarian immediately if you see any of these signs.

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

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.

- ▶ Glipizide should be given with meals.
- ▶ Compounded liquid forms of this medication must be measured carefully. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can help by providing special measuring spoons or syringes.
- ▶ 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 and protected from light.
- ▶ 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 leftover medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?

- ▶ While taking glipizide, your veterinarian will need to do periodic blood tests on your animal to monitor how well it is working. Do not miss these important follow-up visits.
- ▶ If your cat's blood sugar values do not improve after 1-2 months on glipizide, your veterinarian will likely recommend that you switch your cat to insulin injections (shots).
- ▶ There are other drugs used to treat diabetes that sound like glipizide. Do not confuse gliPIZIDE with gliMEPIRIDE or glyBURIDE.
- ▶ Glipizide is not a cure for diabetes, but can help to keep blood sugar under control. Many cats will stop responding to glipizide after several months and must then be treated with insulin injections (shots).
- ▶ 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 you have any other questions or concerns about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.