

# Ipratropium

(eye-prah-troh-pee-um)

**Category:** Bronchodilator

**Other Names for this Medication:** Atrovent®

**Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary:** None. **Human:** 17 micrograms per actuation (puff) aerosol for inhalation; 0.02% solution for nebulization/inhalation; a solution for nasal inhalation is also available.

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

- ▶ Normally given as an aerosol into the lungs, often with other medicines, to help your animal breathe better. Special masks for dogs, cats, and horses are usually used.
- ▶ Ipratropium is usually safe but irritation of the throat and lungs can occur.
- ▶ No need to shake aerosol before each use. Prime (2 sprays) before first using or if not used in past 3 days.
- ▶ Do not store aerosol canister in hot places or burn it.

## How is this medication useful?

Ipratropium relaxes tight airways in the lungs to help animals breathe better. It is used primarily in horses with recurrent airway obstruction (RAO; heaves) along with other treatments. Ipratropium is related to the drug atropine, but has fewer side effects when inhaled.

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 ipratropium, 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 animal 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. Ipratropium appears to be very safe to use in pregnancy.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian and pharmacist about any medication side effects (including allergic reactions, lack of appetite, diarrhea, itching, hair loss) your animal 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 patients:

- ▶ That are allergic to it, or the drug atropine.

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

- ▶ With urinary bladder obstruction, enlarged prostate, and other conditions where urinating is difficult.
- ▶ Narrow-angle glaucoma.

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

## What are the side effects of this medication?

- ▶ Ipratropium rarely has serious side effects. Sometimes it can irritate the airways, leading to coughing.
- ▶ Rarely, ipratropium can cause allergic reactions, dry mouth, or trouble urinating.

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

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

Overdoses of ipratropium are usually not serious; however, if your animal punctures or ingests the canister, there may be problems. If you witness or suspect an overdose and your animal is showing abnormal symptoms, 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.

- ▶ No need to shake canister before use. When using the aerosol or the liquid for nebulization a special mask is usually used to fit the face of the animal to allow more medication to reach the lungs. Your veterinarian will instruct you on the best way to use these products.

- ▶ Cats can be difficult to treat using the aerosol as they may dislike the hissing sound when the canister is actuated and the taste of the aerosol.
- ▶ Practice using the mask on your animal first without using the medication so they will be more likely to accept it when the medication is used.
- ▶ Not necessary to shake the aerosol well before each use. Prime the inhaler device before the first use by pumping 2 test sprays into the air, away from you or your animal. Prime the inhaler if it has not been used in the past 3 days.
- ▶ The dose indicator on the inhaler will turn red when there are 40 doses left in the device. Get your animal's prescription refilled before you run out of medicine completely. Always use the new device provided with the medication when you get your prescription filled.
- ▶ If you have difficulty giving this drug to your animal, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help dosing.
- ▶ This medication can be given for various lengths of time. Be sure you understand how long your veterinarian wants you to continue giving this medication. Prescription refills may be necessary before the therapy will be complete. 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 its original container at room temperature. Do not store in your car on hot days or leave in your glove box.

- ▶ If using the liquid for nebulization, protect from light.
- ▶ 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, but it is always a good idea to 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. Do not burn (incinerate) aerosol canisters. If a community drug "take-back" program is available, use this option. If there is no take-back program, the drug can be thrown away with 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?**

- ▶ 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 using the aerosol metered dose inhalers, do not use after 200 inhalations (puffs) even if there appears to be medication remaining as active ingredient cannot be assured.

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