

Losartan

(loe-sar-tan)

Category: Angiotensin-II Receptor Blocker (ARB)

Other Names for this Medication: Cozaar®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** 25 mg, 50 mg, & 100 mg tablets.

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

- ▶ This medication may be given with or without food.
- ▶ Because this medication has not been often used in dogs or cats side effects are not well known; watch carefully for any side effects and report them to your veterinarian. Possible side effects could include: diarrhea, vomiting, lack of appetite, fatigue (tiredness), and low blood pressure (fainting, weakness, tires easily).
- ▶ **This drug has caused birth defects** and should not be used in pregnant animals. If a human in the household is pregnant, they should be very careful not to ingest these tablets and should wear disposable gloves when administering doses and wash their hands after touching these tablets.

How is this medication useful?

Losartan is used to control high blood pressure and treat some forms of kidney and heart disease in dogs and cats. This medicine can be used to lower the amount of other blood pressure medications and reduce side effects. This drug and others in its class (ARB's) have not been used very often in treating animals, so our understanding of their usefulness and adverse effects is still being developed.

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 in the US. 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.

- ▶ Be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you are giving your animal, as well as the amount and schedule of 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 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 patients:

- ▶ That are dehydrated.
- ▶ That have low blood pressure.
- ▶ That have had an allergic reaction to it or drugs like it (eg, candesartan, irbesartan, olmesartan, telmisartan, valsartan).
- ▶ That are pregnant.

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

- ▶ With severe liver problems.

If your animal matches any of these conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the possible risks of using the drug versus the benefits.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Because this medication has not been used very often in dogs or cats, watch carefully for any side effects and report them to your veterinarian.

Common but usually not serious side effects include:

- ▶ Diarrhea, vomiting, lack of appetite.
- ▶ Fatigue and low blood pressure (eg, weakness, unable to exercise).

Contact your veterinarian if any of these side effects are severe, worsen, or continue to be a problem.

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

- ▶ Collapse (passing out).
- ▶ Unusually low energy level or inability to exercise.

If you see any of these signs, contact your veterinarian immediately.

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

Overdoses of losartan can be serious. 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: **Pet Poison HELPLINE** (855-764-7661) and **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** (888-426-4435); 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.

- ▶ This medication 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.

- ▶ 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 dosing and reducing the stress of medication time.
- ▶ 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 the original child- and light-resistant 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?

Because this medication **can cause birth defects** it should not be used in pregnant animals. Because this drug has a higher risk for causing birth defects, **pregnant women should avoid handling it**. If this is not possible, it is strongly advised that disposable gloves be worn while handling this medication. Don't reuse gloves. Once used, they should be disposed in the trash.

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?

- ▶ Your animal will need to have blood work and blood pressure checks periodically while taking this medicine. Do not miss these important follow-up visits.
- ▶ 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.