

Metoprolol

(me-toe-pro-lole)

Category: Beta-Blocker

Other Names for this Medication: Lopressor®, Toprol XL®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** 25 mg, 37.5 mg, 50 mg, 75 mg, & 100 mg tablets; 25 mg, 50 mg, 100 mg, & 200 mg extended-release tablets. Metoprolol may also be made (compounded) into an oral liquid.

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

- ▶ To be effective, the animal must receive all doses as prescribed. Can be given with or without food.
- ▶ Most common side effects include tiredness/lack of energy and weakness. Low blood pressure is possible. Heart rate can slow too much and worsen heart problems if dose is too high. Notify veterinarian if animal becomes exercise intolerant, has shortness of breath or cough, or develops a change in behavior or attitude.
- ▶ When starting this drug, your veterinarian may start with a low dose and gradually increase it over time to see how your animal reacts to it. Do not administer more drug than your veterinarian has prescribed.
- ▶ Very important not to stop the drug abruptly without veterinarian's guidance.

How is this medication useful?

Metoprolol is a beta blocker that veterinarians prescribe for treatment for certain heart rhythm problems, hypertension, or for hypertrophic cardiomyopathy in cats.

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 USA. 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 cause problems when taken with metoprolol. 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 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 patients:

- ▶ With severe heart failure, asthma, heart block, very slow heart rate, or animals in shock.
- ▶ That have had an allergic or severe reaction to it or other drugs in the same class, (eg, propranolol, carvedilol, sotalol).

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

- ▶ With severe liver problems as the drug is metabolized in the liver.
- ▶ With diabetes because propranolol can hide signs associated with low blood sugar.
- ▶ With an overactive thyroid because propranolol can hide the signs of an overactive thyroid.

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?

- ▶ Lack of energy or acting tired at the beginning of treatment.
- ▶ Diarrhea (in dogs).

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.

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

- ▶ Very slow heart rate, collapse (passing out), weakness, or coughing, wheezing, or trouble breathing.

These signs do not occur commonly and usually mean the dose is too high for your animal. 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 metoprolol can be serious. If you witness or suspect an overdose of metoprolol in your animal, 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.

- ▶ The drug 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.

- ▶ 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 reduce the stress of medication time.
- ▶ If you want to stop giving the medication before the prescription is completed, first contact your veterinarian. This is very important with this class of medications.

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

If you miss a dose, give it when you remember, then wait the amount of time between doses recommended by your veterinarian before giving another dose. Do not double-up doses or give an extra dose.

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?

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?

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Your veterinarian will need to monitor your pet closely while taking this medicine. Do not miss these important follow-up visits.

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