

Metyrapone

(me-*teer*-a-pone)

Category: Adrenal Steroid Inhibitor

Other Names for this Medication: Metopirone®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** Oral capsules: 250 mg. Smaller dosage forms can be made (compounded) for use in cats.

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

- ▶ Primarily used to stabilize cats with hyperadrenocorticism (too much stress hormone in the body; Cushing's disease) before surgery. May also be used in ferrets and hamsters but little is known about the drug in these species.
- ▶ May be given with or without food, but with food is preferred as it may help prevent vomiting.
- ▶ Experience in cats is limited, but it seems to be tolerated well. Cats with diabetes will need their blood sugar monitored carefully while receiving this drug. Report any unusual symptoms you see to your veterinarian.
- ▶ Will need to be made (compounded) into a dosage form appropriate for cats or other small animals. Follow storage recommendations for the compounded product.

How is this medication useful?

Metyrapone may be used to treat cats with hyperadrenocorticism (too much stress hormone in the body; Cushing's disease), especially short-term to stabilize the patient prior to surgery. Metyrapone may also be used to treat hyperadrenocorticism in ferrets and small mammals (eg, hamsters), but there is little information available on its use in these species.

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 patients:

- ▶ That are allergic to it.
- ▶ With adrenocortical insufficiency (too little stress hormone in the body; Addison's disease).

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

- ▶ With diabetes mellitus (ie, sugar diabetes). Blood sugar levels will need to be monitored carefully.
- ▶ That are pregnant.

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?

Cats appear to tolerate metyrapone well, but use of it has been limited so if you believe the drug is causing a side effect or problem, contact your veterinarian.

Side effects that are possible include:

- ▶ Vomiting, reduced appetite.
- ▶ Seizures, weakness, collapse (passing out), muscle twitching, depression, or unsteadiness. These signs may be caused by low blood sugar in particular, in diabetic animals receiving insulin injections.

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?

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.

- ▶ The drug may be given either with food or on an empty stomach, but giving it with food is preferred as this may help prevent vomiting after a dose. If your animal vomits after receiving it on an empty stomach, give it with a small amount of food or treat to see if this helps. 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 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 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?

- ▶ 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.