

Mitotane

(mye-toe-tane)

Category: Agent to treat Cushing's disease

Other Names for this Medication: Lysodren®, o,p'-DDD

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** 500 mg tablets. When used in small dogs and ferrets this drug may need to be made (compounded) into a suitable strength.

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

- ▶ Mitotane treatment requires intensive monitoring and close supervision by you and your veterinarian. Be sure you understand the signs associated with overdose of this medicine.
- ▶ The drug should be given with high fat foods for best absorption.
- ▶ Improvement in signs (eg, eats, drinks, and urinates less) usually seen 5-14 days after starting drug.
- ▶ The most common side effects are stomach upset (acting sick), diarrhea, and vomiting. Your veterinarian will give you specific instructions of what to do when you see side effects. Do not hesitate to call your veterinarian if you have any concerns while your pet is taking this medicine.
- ▶ Pregnant women should not handle mitotane; others should wear disposable gloves when handling the drug.

How is this medication useful?

In dogs and ferrets, mitotane is one type of treatment for the control of Cushing's disease (hyperadrenocorticism; adrenal glands produce too much stress hormone).

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.
- ▶ That are pregnant or nursing.
- ▶ That are sick, weak, or frail.
- ▶ That are not eating.

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

- ▶ That have diabetes mellitus (sugar diabetes); insulin requirements can rapidly change when this drug is first used.
- ▶ That have kidney or liver problems.

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 may be serious or indicate a serious problem:

- ▶ Vomiting, stomach upset (acts sick), and diarrhea are the most common side effects seen.
- ▶ Low energy level, weakness, incoordination, stumbling.
- ▶ Lack of an appetite.
- ▶ Yellowish color to gums, skin, or whites of the eyes (jaundice).

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

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

If you witness or suspect an overdose, immediately 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?

Mitotane treatment requires close monitoring and supervision by you and your veterinarian. For this medication to work, give it exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. Often the drug is given at a higher dose or more often when the drug is started and then the dose is reduced as it starts to take effect. It's a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly. The following are general guidelines; your veterinarian will give you specific instructions on how best to use this drug:

- ▶ The drug should be given with high fat foods (eg, ice cream, butter, corn oil, cheese, butter).

- ▶ Crushed tablets, compounded liquids, and powders are usually mixed into food, or sprinkled on food with a little corn oil.
- ▶ Because whole or split tablets can be absorbed differently than liquids or crushed tablets/powders, do not change the way you are giving this medicine without first talking to 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?

- ▶ Because this drug can cause birth defects, pregnant women should avoid handling the medication.
- ▶ Disposable gloves should be worn when giving this medicine to your pet to avoid contact with bare skin as it can cause serious adverse effects in people or animals exposed to it. Do not reuse gloves. Once used, the gloves should be thrown out in the trash.
- ▶ Do not allow the drug to contact your skin, eyes, or mouth. Skin or eyes exposed to powder or liquids containing the drug should immediately be washed or rinsed off thoroughly and your physician contacted.
- ▶ This drug may also be found in the treated animal's saliva, urine, or feces. Wear gloves when disposing of cat litter or dog droppings or cleaning up urine spills or vomit. Do not let treated animals lick human skin.

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 or contact your veterinarian to see if they can dispose of it safely. If not, 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?

- ▶ If your animal requires surgery or has been injured, be sure to tell the veterinarian that your animal has been taking this medication. Mitotane can decrease the body's ability to handle stress and drugs like prednisone may be needed during stressful periods.
- ▶ Your pet will need to be monitored closely while on this medication. Do not miss these important follow-up visits for bloodwork checks and examinations.
- ▶ Keep in close contact with your veterinarian while your pet is on this medication and report any concerns you may have as soon as possible.
- ▶ Often, you can tell if mitotane is starting to work when your animal drinks, eats, and urinates less. Your veterinarian may have you measure how much your animal eats and drinks while using this drug.
- ▶ 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.