

Oxytetracycline

(ocks-ee-tet-ra-sye-kleen)

Category: Tetracycline Antibiotic

Other Names for this Medication: Terramycin®, Liquamycin®, Biomycin®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: 250 mg tablets; 50 mg/mL, 100 mg/mL, 200 mg/mL, & 300 mg/mL injection. **Human:** None.

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

- ▶ Oral oxytetracycline should be given on an empty stomach spaced 1-2 hours apart from food, milk, other dairy products, and minerals such as calcium or iron. If animal vomits or acts sick after getting it on an empty stomach, give with food or a small treat to see if this helps. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ May permanently stain teeth and developing bones in young animals.
- ▶ This drug may make your animal's skin more sensitive to sunlight and increase the risk of sunburn on hairless areas such as the nose and around the eyelids and ears. Tell your veterinarian if you notice any reddening/sunburn on the skin while your animal is on this medication.
- ▶ Injectable forms may be painful and stain skin and muscle.

How is this medication useful?

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in dogs, cats, cattle, swine, fish, and poultry for treating infections that are susceptible to it. The FDA does allow veterinarians to prescribe and use 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 taking 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 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.
- ▶ 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 other tetracycline drugs.
- ▶ That are pregnant or nursing unless the benefits to the mother outweigh the risks to the offspring.

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

- ▶ That have liver or kidney problems.
- ▶ That are young and still developing bones and teeth.

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?

Side effects that usually are not serious include:

- ▶ Stomach upset, loss of appetite, and diarrhea.
- ▶ Reddening of hairless skin when exposed to sunlight.

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:

- ▶ Tiredness, weakness, and signs of infection (eg, high fever), which may indicate suppressed bone marrow function.
- ▶ Liver toxicity. Signs that might be seen include vomiting; severe or bloody diarrhea; lack of appetite; yellowing of eyes, skin, or gums (jaundice); tender or painful abdomen (stomach); bleeding; seizures (convulsions); or severe changes in behavior.

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

If my animal 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.

- ▶ Oral forms of this drug should be given on an empty stomach spaced 1-2 hours apart from food, milk or other dairy products, and minerals such as iron or calcium. If your animal vomits or acts sick after getting it on an empty stomach, give with food or a small treat to see if this helps although this may decrease the effect of the drug. 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.

By Injection.

- ▶ Your veterinarian or pharmacist will give you all of the items you need to give the injections (shots); needles, syringes, diluent, alcohol swabs. If the medicine needs to be mixed before you give it, mix it exactly as your veterinarian or pharmacist instructs you.
- ▶ Use a new needle and new syringe to give each injection. Do not reuse needles and syringes.
- ▶ Because this drug must be injected, be sure you understand the proper dosage, location(s), and method for giving the shots.
- ▶ Injectable forms may be painful and stain skin and muscle when injected. Your veterinarian will tell you what amount of this drug is right for your animal and instruct you on techniques and locations for administration. Be sure you understand these instructions completely.
- ▶ Wash your hands before handling needles, syringes, and medication bottle.
- ▶ Turn the bottle and syringe upside down. Making sure the tip of the needle is in the liquid and remove the correct amount into the syringe.
- ▶ Before removing the needle from the bottle, check the syringe for any air bubbles. If bubbles are present, hold the syringe straight up and tap its side until the bubbles float to the top. Push them out with the plunger and withdraw the correct dose. Remove the needle from the bottle, being careful to not stick yourself.
- ▶ Give your animal the injection as instructed by your veterinarian.
- ▶ Place used needles and syringes in a sharps disposal container immediately after they have been used. Your veterinarian or pharmacist will help you obtain these containers. Be careful not to accidentally stick yourself; do not attempt to disconnect the needle from the syringe. Keep containers out of reach of children and animals. Once about $\frac{3}{4}$ full, dispose containers according to your community guidelines. Check with your local trash removal services or health department (listed online and in the city or county government [blue] pages in your phone book) to see which disposal methods are available in your area.

- ▶ 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 oral forms of this medication in the original prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder container (ie, pill minder) at room temperature and protected from light.
- ▶ Store injectable liquids at room temperature; avoid freezing.
- ▶ 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.