

Ronidazole

(roe-nid-ah-zole)

Category: Antiprotozoal Agent

Other Names for this Medication: Ridasol-S®, Belga®, Ronida®, Ronivet®, Ronizol®, Turbosol®, Tricho Plus®, Trichocure®, Trichorex®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** None. This drug must be made by compounding pharmacists. Ronidazole powders for poultry are available in other countries, but are not concentrated enough for treating cat.

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

- ▶ Keep medicine stored in the freezer.
- ▶ Give with food to avoid stomach or intestinal problems.
- ▶ Side effects in cats can include fever, loss of appetite, trouble keeping balance, trouble walking or climbing stairs, muscle twitching or weakness, seizures (convulsions), tiredness/lack of energy, nystagmus (eyes uncontrollably moving back and forth). Contact veterinarian immediately if any of these signs are seen.
- ▶ This medicine has caused cancer at high doses in laboratory animals. Do not open or crush capsules; give them to your animal whole. Wear disposable gloves when handling and wash hands afterwards.
- ▶ Wear disposable gloves when cleaning the litter box, double bag feces, and throw both gloves and feces in trash. Do not flush feces down toilet.
- ▶ Must not be given to any animals that will be consumed by humans.

How is this medication useful?

Ronidazole is medicine used to treat a protozoal infection (ie, *Tritrichomonas foetus*; TTF) in cats. This infection causes severe diarrhea. This medicine may also be used to treat TTF in birds.

While ronidazole is approved for use in poultry in other countries, it is not approved for use in either animals or humans 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. Because ronidazole may cause cancer, it cannot be used in any animal that is to be used for human consumption in the US.

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, including alcohol can cause problems when taken with ronidazole, 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 how well the treatment 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 animals:

- ▶ That are allergic to it.
- ▶ That are to be consumed by humans.

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

- ▶ That have a seizure disorder (eg, epilepsy).

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?

Common, but not serious side effects include:

- ▶ Cats: vomiting and loss of appetite.

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:

- ▶ Seizures (convulsions).
- ▶ Collapse (passing out); weakness or unable to stand up.
- ▶ Muscle twitching.
- ▶ Nystagmus (eyes uncontrollably moving back and forth),
- ▶ Fever, extreme tiredness/lack of energy, or depression.

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?

One-time overdoses of ronidazole can cause serious adverse reactions, including seizures. 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.

- ▶ Give with food. Cats do not like the bitter taste of ronidazole so a pharmacist will usually put it into gelatin capsules.
- ▶ Cats normally get this drug once a day. Try to give this medicine the same time each day.
- ▶ 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 with food when you remember, but if you are giving it once a day and it is within 12 hours of the time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and give the medication at the next regular scheduled dosing time. Do not double-up or give extra doses.

How should I store this medication?

- ▶ Store this medication in the original light-resistant prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder (ie, pill minder) container in the freezer or refrigerator as instructed by your pharmacist.
- ▶ Keep away from children and other animals.

Can handling this medication be hazardous to me, my family, or other pets?

This drug can cause serious adverse effects in people or animals that are exposed to it, disposable gloves should be worn while handling this medication. Do not reuse gloves. Once used, throw them out in the trash. Do not allow the drug to come into contact with your skin, eyes, or gums. This drug may also be found in the treated animal's saliva, urine, or feces, so gloves should be worn when disposing of cat litter or dog feces, or cleaning up urine spills or vomit. Do not let treated animals lick human skin. If skin exposure occurs, the area should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

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 (double bag feces) to keep contents 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?

- ▶ Ronidazole should never be given to any animal that is to be consumed as food by humans.
- ▶ 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.