

# Bromides: Potassium Bromide/Sodium Bromide

(broe-myde)

**Category:** Anticonvulsant

**Other Names for this Medication:** KBr, K-BroVet®

**Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary:** 250 mg, 500 mg Potassium Bromide chewable tablets (also contains vitamin B12); 250 mg/mL Potassium Bromide oral liquid (also contains vitamins B6 & B12). **Human:** None. Compounded dosage forms may be available.

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

- ▶ Used for epilepsy in dogs; rarely used in cats due to adverse effects.
- ▶ Give with food. If mixed into food, elevate the food bowl.
- ▶ Most common side effect is drowsiness that usually improves after the first few weeks.
- ▶ Watch for serious side effects.
- ▶ Do not give salty snacks or food.

## How is this medication useful?

Bromides (potassium or sodium) are used to treat dogs with seizure disorders (eg, epilepsy). This drug is rarely used in cats with seizure disorders due to side effects from the drug. 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 pet. Be sure to discuss the following with your veterinarian so together you can make the best treatment decisions.

- ▶ Other drugs can interact with bromides, so be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you give your pet, 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 pet has been treated for the same disease or condition in the past, tell your veterinarian about the treatment and how well it worked or didn't work.
- ▶ If your pet is pregnant or nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this drug. Human infants have shown delayed growth when born to mothers who took bromides.
- ▶ 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 drug 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 bromides.

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

- ▶ With kidney damage as the drug is eliminated from the body by the kidneys.
- ▶ Who are pregnant or nursing.
- ▶ That are cats.

If your pet has any of these conditions or signs, 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:

- ▶ Dogs: Bromides can cause drowsiness for up to 3 weeks after starting the drug. Most dogs will eventually get used to this and not be drowsy with continuing therapy.
- ▶ Vomiting or reduced appetite due to gastrointestinal tract irritation. Giving with food may decrease this effect.
- ▶ Attention seeking, irritability, or aimless pacing.
- ▶ Constipation.
- ▶ Greater hunger, thirst, and need to urinate.

You don't have to be overly concerned if you see any of these unless they are severe, worsen, or continue to be a problem. Contact your veterinarian if this happens.

Side effects that may indicate a serious problem:

- ▶ Severe or continuous vomiting or diarrhea, or a yellowing of the whites of the eyes may indicate pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), especially when bromides are used with phenobarbital.
- ▶ Muscle pain or twitching, stumbling or can't get up, excessive drooling or shivering, or uneven pupil size may mean the dose is too high.
- ▶ Aggression (threatening behaviors and actions; rare).
- ▶ Rashes.
- ▶ Cats: Can develop a lung condition (like asthma) when taking bromides. Watch very closely for coughing and trouble breathing.

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

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

Overdoses of bromides can be serious. 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: ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) and Pet Poison HELPLINE (855-764-7661); 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.

- ▶ Bromides are best given with food. If your veterinarian has instructed you to mix the bromide with food, raise the food bowl. Bromides can cause vomiting and this can reduce the chance of vomit being inhaled into the lungs while eating.
- ▶ If capsules are given, make sure the animal completely swallows the capsules and that enough food or water is taken in to carry the

capsule all the way to the stomach. Capsules stuck between the mouth and stomach can cause severe irritation and damage to the throat and esophagus.

- ▶ When first starting bromide therapy, your veterinarian may instruct you to give doses that are up to 5 times the normal dose. This is to get bromide into your animal's bloodstream more quickly. Follow your veterinarian's instructions very carefully during this period to achieve the best response to therapy and reduce side effects.
- ▶ 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 is typically used long term for control of your pet's seizures. 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. Do not stop administration of this drug suddenly.

**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 (ie, pill minder) container at room temperature. Keep away from children and other animals; this is especially important for the flavored chewable tablets.
- ▶ If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the storage recommendations and expiration date for the product.

**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 left over 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.
- ▶ The intake of chloride must be very carefully controlled while your animal is on this drug. Do not give your animal any salty treats and check with your veterinarian before introducing new foods or snacks while on this medication.

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