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PHENOBARBITAL - *Full Version*

CPN: 63000827

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Seizures are an involuntary behavior that can be classified into several categories including generalized (grand mal), partial or psychomotor. Seizures can be due to an underlying medical condition, toxin or a brain abnormality. Epilepsy is a term for a repeated seizure disorder in which a cause has not been identified. **Phenobarbital** is an anti-seizure medication which is available as an injection and as tablets of varying strengths. **Phenobarbital** may be used alone or in combination with other drugs to help manage your pet's seizures.

WHAT IS THIS DRUG?

- A barbiturate used primarily as an anti-seizure or anticonvulsant medication
- Under U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), **Phenobarbital** is a controlled substance. This is a medication that has the potential for abuse. These medications can assist in providing appropriate patient care but also require a valid veterinary client-patient relationship and a veterinary prescription. Further legislation regarding storage, prescription, dispensing, and record keeping have been put in place to prevent drug abuse.
- Given by mouth, or by injection at your veterinarian's office

REASONS FOR PRESCRIBING:

- To assist with the management of seizures in dogs or cats

ANIMAL PRECAUTIONS:

- This medication is labeled for use in dogs but used off-label in cats and should be administered only when and as prescribed by a licensed veterinarian
- **Use of this medication in any other species should be in consultation with a veterinarian**

- Use of this prescribed medication in animals with any of the following conditions should be limited to those who are under the supervision of a veterinarian:
 - Liver or lung disease
 - Dehydrated or anemic pets, or those with Addison's, heart or kidney disease
- Safety has not been established in:
 - Pregnant or nursing animals
- This medication should be used with caution in animals that require full alertness when performing - guide dogs, police dogs, search and rescue dogs
- Animals with a known hypersensitivity or allergy to this or other barbiturates should not be given this medication

DIRECTIONS:

Read and follow the label carefully.

Give this medication for as long as your veterinarian directs. Do not skip doses or stop giving the medication without consulting your veterinarian. Missed doses reduce the effectiveness of therapy and seizures may reoccur. This medication is usually given for the rest of your pet's life. Do not discontinue the drug abruptly or without directions from your veterinarian, as your pet's condition may worsen.

Ideally, give the medication at the same time(s) daily.

When **Phenobarbital** is started, allow 2-4 weeks to reach stable blood levels. Seizures may occur during this period.

Baseline blood work may be recommended to assess your pet's general health before starting this medication. Periodic blood work to monitor its effects on the body and to ensure therapeutic levels will be advised if long term therapy is necessary. Dose adjustments may be made based upon these results and an assessment of how your dog or cat is responding clinically.

Discuss with your veterinarian if this medication is to be given with food. If your pet experiences digestive upset following medication administration, try offering with a small amount of food or a treat.

It may take a week for the level of the drug to stabilize after a dose change.

Record the date, time, severity, length and circumstances of any seizure your pet has. Provide this information to your veterinarian in order to help him/her to best treat your pet.

This medication can take a few weeks before full effects are observed, but gradual improvements are usually noticeable after a few days.

If you have been instructed to discontinue this medication, it should be withdrawn slowly.

If you have difficulty giving the medication, contact your veterinarian.

Because this drug is a controlled drug, you will need a new prescription from your veterinarian every 6 months. Call ahead for refills.

WHAT IF A DOSE IS MISSED?

If a dose is missed, give it as soon as you can as missing even one dose can lead to a seizure. If it is time already for the next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to the normal schedule. Do not give two doses at the same time.

WHAT TO TELL/ASK YOUR VETERINARIAN BEFORE GIVING THIS MEDICATION?

Talk to your veterinarian about:

- When will your pet need to be rechecked
- What tests may need to be performed prior to and during treatment with this drug
- What are the safety concerns when using this product in different species
- What are the risks and benefits of using this drug

Tell your veterinarian about:

- If your pet has experienced side effects on other drugs/products
- If your pet has experienced liver or kidney disease now or ever
- If your pet has experienced any other medical problems or allergies now or ever
- All medicines and supplements that you are giving your pet or plan to give your pet, including those you can get without a prescription. Your veterinarian may want to check that all of your pet's medicines can be given together.
- If your pet is pregnant or nursing or if you plan to breed your pet

STORAGE AND WARNINGS:

Store in a tight, light resistant, childproof container in a cool, dry place at room temperature away from heat and direct sunlight.

Keep this and all medication out of reach of children and pets.

Due to the potential for abuse, **Phenobarbital** should be stored in a locked cabinet.

Call your physician immediately if you accidentally take this product.

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS:

- Your pet will likely be tired when first prescribed **Phenobarbital** . Some pets become agitated and anxious too. If these side effects do not disappear or get worse, contact your veterinarian.
- Your pet may want to eat, drink and urinate more often
- Your pet may stagger, seem depressed or sedated
- May cause liver disease at high doses (especially in dogs). Liver enzymes should be monitored before and during therapy. If you notice jaundice (yellow gums, skin or eyes), let your veterinarian know.

- **Phenobarbital** depresses breathing which may cause an oxygen shortage and cause pets to overheat
- Many laboratory tests are affected by **Phenobarbital** such as thyroid and low dose dexamethasone suppression tests
- Bone marrow suppression, anemias or low platelets are possible. Watch for weakness, pale gums or increased bleeding or bruising tendencies.
- If you notice anything unusual, contact your veterinarian
- This short-acting medication should stop working within 24 hours, although effects may last longer in pets with liver or kidney disease

CAN THIS DRUG BE GIVEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

- Yes, but possible interactions may occur when giving **Phenobarbital** in conjunction with acetaminophen, ammonium chloride, antihistamines, azole antifungals (fluconazole, ketoconazole, itraconazole), benzimidazoles (albendazole, fenbendazole), benzodiazepines (diazepam), bromides, buspirone, carprofen, central nervous system depressants (methocarbamol, dexmedetomidine, xylazine, mirtazapine, trazadone), clarithromycin, clindamycin, chloramphenicol, cholestyramine, corticosteroids, cyclosporine, digoxin, doxorubicin, doxycycline, estrogens, felbamate, griseofulvin, ivermectin, levetiracetam, levothyroxine, methadone, metoprolol, metronidazole, monoamine oxidase (MOA) inhibitors (amitraz, selegiline), opioids, paroxetine, phenothiazines, phenytoin, praziquantel, prednisone, progestins, quinidine, rifampin, sulfonamides, tacrolimus, theophylline, topiramate, tricyclic antidepressants, urinary alkalinizers, valproic acid, verapamil, vincristine, vitamin D, voriconazole, warfarin and zonisamide
- Drugs other than those listed may also interact with **Phenobarbital**
- Do not give new food or medications without first talking to your veterinarian
- If your pet experiences any unusual reactions when taking multiple medications, contact your veterinarian.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I KNOW OF OR SUSPECT THERE HAS BEEN AN OVERDOSE?

Contact your veterinarian immediately if your pet receives more than the prescribed amount.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

Notify your veterinarian if your animal's condition does not improve or worsens despite this treatment.

As with all prescribed medicines, **Phenobarbital** should only be given to the pet for which it was prescribed. It should be given only for the condition for which it was prescribed, at the prescribed dose, as directed by your veterinarian.

This is just a summary of information about **Phenobarbital**. If you have any questions or concerns about **Phenobarbital** or the condition for which it was prescribed, contact your veterinarian.

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