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## PREDNISONE, PREDNISOLONE AND PREDNISOLONE ACETATE - *Full Version*

**CPN:** 63000876

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

This medication may be used to treat a variety of different conditions in both dogs and cats. This type of steroid may be used to replace or supplement a pet that is deficient in steroid production, as an anti-inflammatory agent to reduce inflammation, as an immunosuppressant to suppress the immune system or as an anti-cancer treatment.

Oral tablets and solutions are available by prescription from a licensed veterinarian, as well as injectable forms.

### WHAT IS THIS DRUG?

- Members of the glucocorticoid class of hormones. This type of steroid breaks down stored resources (fats, carbohydrates and proteins) so that they can be used as fuel at times of stress. Glucocorticoids are naturally produced by the adrenal glands to prepare the body metabolically for physical exercise and stress.
- **Prednisone** is activated by the patient's liver into **Prednisolone**. These products are considered interchangeable, although some cats are not efficient at the conversion and do better on **Prednisolone**.
- Given by mouth, or by injection at your veterinary clinic

### REASONS FOR PRESCRIBING:

- Used in dogs and cats as an anti-inflammatory for the relief of inflamed areas, to decrease swelling, redness, itching and allergic reactions
- Used in dogs and cats as an immunosuppressant to help treat auto-immune disorders
- Used to supplement or replace steroids in conditions where the body is not adequately producing its own steroids such as with hypoadrenocorticism or Addison's disease
- Used as a chemotherapy agent to help with cancer treatment

### ANIMAL PRECAUTIONS:

- This medication is labeled for use in cats and dogs 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:
  - Systemic fungal infection
  - Some types of mange (mites)
  - History of seizures
  - Stomach ulcers, corneal ulcers, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, liver and kidney disease or congestive heart failure
  - Serious bacterial or viral infections or gastrointestinal ulceration(s)
  - Very young animals and diabetics
  - Hyperadrenocorticism or Cushing's disease
- Safety has not been established in:
  - Pregnant animals or in breeding males
- Animals with a known hypersensitivity or allergy to this or related products should not be given this medication

## DIRECTIONS:

The injectable formulation of this medication is often given in the safety of a veterinary hospital with adequate patient monitoring and is rarely prescribed for use at home.

For oral formulations, read and follow the label carefully.

Give the exact amount prescribed and only as often as directed. If given just once daily, dogs usually receive glucocorticoid drugs in the morning, and cats receive it in the evening (this mimics their natural hormone cycles). Ideally give this medication at the same time(s) daily.

The prime objective of steroid therapy is to achieve a satisfactory degree of control with a minimum effective dose.

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. Your pet may start at a high dose and then have it reduced.

**Prednisone/Prednisolone** may be prescribed for several weeks or even months. Individualization of dosage and duration of treatment will depend upon your pet's reaction to this drug.

It is important that the dose be tapered to an every other day schedule once the condition is controlled so do not discontinue the drug abruptly.

Baseline blood work may be recommended to assess your pet's general health before starting this medication. Periodic blood work may be recommended to monitor this medication's effects on the body if your pet is undergoing long-term therapy. Dose

adjustments may be made based upon these results and an assessment of how your dog or cat is responding clinically.

Give oral forms with food to reduce the chance of stomach ulcers. This medication can cause an increase in thirst, ensure your pet has access to fresh water at all times.

This medication will take effect quickly, in about 1 to 2 hours, but its effects may not be visibly noticeable for a few days.

Call ahead for refills.

### **WHAT IF A DOSE IS MISSED?**

If a dose is missed, give it as soon as you can, regardless of feeding status. 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 digestive upset now or ever
- 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.

Pets that have received long term steroids, should be slowly tapered when discontinuing.

This medication can interfere with certain laboratory testing.

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

Call your physician immediately if you accidentally take this product.

## POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS:

- Most side effects are due to either high doses or long-term administration which can have negative effects on the endocrine system, specifically the adrenal glands
- Most common side effects are increased thirst, appetite and urination. Your pet may have accidents and need to go outside or use the litter box more frequently. Discuss these side effects with your veterinarian as the dose may be lowered or another steroid could be selected.
- This medication causes the kidney to conserve salt. This could be a problem in patients with congestive heart failure or other patients who require sodium restriction.
- May stunt growth if used in young, growing animals
- May lower seizure threshold and alter mood and behavior
- At high doses, this medication can cause birth defects early in pregnancy, be irritating to the stomach or cause higher than normal blood sugar levels
- If your pet has received high doses, it should not be vaccinated without your veterinarian's advice as the vaccine may not work or it may actually give your pet the disease you are trying to prevent
- Less common side effects include weight gain, insomnia, panting, diarrhea, vomiting, elevated liver enzymes, pancreatitis and behavior changes
- Serious side effects are not expected with routine use. When higher doses are used or if use is chronic (ie. longer than 4 months on an every other day schedule), the side effects and concerns become different. Watch for muscle loss, weakness, and the development of diabetes or Cushing's disease. Typical signs of these diseases are increased thirst, urination and appetite. Cushingoid pets may develop thin skin, poor hair coat and a 'pot belly'. Monitoring tests or changing therapy may be recommended.
- High doses may lead to immune system suppression, making your pet more susceptible to infections. Contact your veterinarian if your pet has a fever (over 103°F), painful or frequent urination, fatigue, sneezing, coughing or runny eyes.
- 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 with amphotericin B, aspirin, barbiturates, bupropion, cholestyramine, clarithromycin, cyclophosphamide, cyclosporine, digoxin, erythromycin, furosemide, ephedrine, estrogens, fluroquinolones, insulin, ketoconazole, mitotane, mycophenolate, neostigmine, NSAIDs or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (aspirin, carprofen, deracoxib, meloxicam), phenobarbital, pyridostigmine, rifampin, thiazides, some vaccines and warfarin.
- Drugs other than those listed may also interact with this medication
- 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, **Prednisone/Prednisolone** 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 **Prednisone/Prednisolone**. If you have any questions or concerns about **Prednisone/Prednisolone** or the condition for which it was prescribed, contact your veterinarian.

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