



The Animal Cardiology Center
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Amiodarone

(a-mee-oh-**da**-rone)

Description:

Antiarrhythmic Agent

Other Names for this Medication:

Cordarone®, Pacerone®

Common Dosage Forms:

Veterinary: None. Human: 100 mg, 200 mg, & 400 mg tablets.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication and has not been reviewed by FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine. This sheet can help answer commonly asked questions but is not a substitute for medical advice. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Key Information

This drug has not been used often in dogs, and therefore not all side effects are known. Most commonly reported side effects seen in dogs are vomiting and lack of appetite. Consult your veterinarian if there are any unexpected effects.

May interact with other medications. Make sure your veterinarian is aware of all medications and supplements your animal is receiving.

Do not miss important follow-up visits with your veterinarian while your animal is taking this medication.

How is this medication useful?

Amiodarone is used to treat heart rhythm abnormalities. The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in humans, but it is not officially approved for use in animals. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe and use human products containing this drug in animals 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 interact with this medication, 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.

How long until I will know if this medication is working, and how long will the effects of this medication last?

This medication takes several doses before you will see any benefits. The medication's full effects may not be evident until it has been given consistently for several weeks, although you may see some side effects (eg, upset stomach or sleepiness) immediately. Your animal's clinical signs will improve gradually over the time the medication takes to become fully effective.

The effects of this medication are long-lived, meaning they may last for multiple (ie, 4 to 6) weeks, although they may be prolonged if your animal has decreased kidney and/or liver function.

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.

That have certain heart rhythm abnormalities. This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in patients:

With salt (electrolyte) imbalances. With thyroid problems.

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:

Lack of appetite or vomiting in dogs.

If either of these signs are severe, worsen, or continue to be a problem, contact your veterinarian.

Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:

Liver toxicity. Signs that might be seen include vomiting (dogs); 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.

Low energy level or collapse may indicate a heart rate or blood pressure that is too low. Blood test abnormalities.

Deposits on the eye; changes in eye color.

If you see any of these signs, contact your veterinarian immediately. Because amiodarone is not used commonly in animals, be sure to contact your veterinarian if you have any other concerns about your animal while taking this medicine.

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 open 24 hours a day include: **Pet Poison HELPLINE** (855-764-7661) and **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** (888- 426-4435); a consultation fee may be charged for these services.

How should this medication be given?

For this medication to work properly, give it exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. Check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.

The drug may be given either with food or on an empty stomach. If your animal vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. 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 reduce the stress of medication time for both you and your animal.

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. If you want to stop giving this medication, talk to your veterinarian, as there may be important reasons to continue giving it.

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 enough 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 container (ie, pill minder) at room temperature and protected from light.

If your veterinarian or pharmacist has prepared (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 animals?

Pregnant women and people who are allergic to this drug should be very careful not to accidentally take it. **Because this drug has a higher risk for causing birth defects, pregnant women should wear disposable gloves when giving doses or handling the drug and avoid inhaling any dust from split or crushed tablets.** Skin or eyes exposed to powder or liquids containing the drug should immediately be washed or rinsed off thoroughly. Contact your physician if you have concerns about exposure.

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 about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.