



Medicine series

Practice details

Prazosin

- Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again.
- Please ask your vet or veterinary nurse if you have any further questions.
- This medicine has been prescribed for your pet ONLY. Do not take it yourself or give it to another person or any other animal; it may harm them even if their symptoms appear to be the same.

The medicine you have been given for your dog or cat is called prazosin. It may have a trade name such as Hypovase™, but often will just be called prazosin.

What is prazosin?

Prazosin belongs to a group of medicines called alpha-blockers. These drugs cause blood vessels to relax, thereby reducing blood pressure.

Why has my pet been prescribed prazosin?

Prazosin is used to treat heart failure, usually when other drugs are either no longer working or have not worked at all. It relaxes the main blood vessels of the heart, allowing the blood to pump more easily. Prazosin is also used, alone or with other drugs, to treat hypertension (high blood pressure). Prazosin may also be used to promote the flow of urine in pets that have difficulty urinating due to urethral spasms.

How should I store prazosin?

This medicine should be stored at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

How do I give prazosin tablets to my pet?

Try to disguise them in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, they can be placed carefully on the back of your pet's tongue and their mouth held closed until the entire dose has been swallowed. Ensure that plenty of fresh water is available.

How long will my pet need to take prazosin?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients. Do not stop giving prazosin to your pet unless advised to do so by your vet.

What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more prazosin from your vet if your supply is getting low. Missing a dose may cause signs of your pet's disease to return. If you do run out, contact your own vet for further advice and restart the course as soon as possible.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If a dose is missed, give the medication as soon as possible. However, it is best to skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your pet's next scheduled dose. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed dose and do not exceed the total stated dose in any one 24-hour period.

What should I do if my pet is accidentally given too many doses?

Contact your vet immediately if your pet receives an overdose of prazosin as higher doses increase the risk of side effects.

Can my pet take prazosin if I am already giving them other drugs?

Tell your vet if you are giving your pet any other medications, even if you think they know. This includes herbal and off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop, pharmacy or health store. Drugs such as beta-blockers (e.g. propranolol), calcium channel blockers (e.g. amlodipine and diltiazem), some diuretics and sulphonamide antibiotics can increase the strength of prazosin's effect.

What are the possible side effects of prazosin for my pet?

Prazosin may cause drowsiness, vomiting and diarrhoea. In people, prazosin can cause low blood pressure, resulting in dizziness, weakness, fainting or collapse. If your pet shows any unusual symptoms whilst taking this medication, please contact your vet.

What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking prazosin?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, you should not give any further doses and should contact your vet as soon as possible for advice.

What should I do if a person accidentally takes this drug?

If a person accidentally takes your pet's medicine, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets plus their container (even if it is empty) with you.

Whom do I contact if I want to know more?

If you have any questions about this drug or concerns about your pet's health, contact your own vet. They will know your pet's medical history and will know about prazosin.

The Prescribing Cascade

This medicine is authorized for use in human patients and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. The medicine is not authorized by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), for use in dogs/cats/pets. Your vet can explain the 'prescribing cascade' in further detail to you and also explain why they are prescribing this drug for your pet. You will be asked to sign a consent form stating that you understand the reasons that the drug is being prescribed and its possible complications, before the treatment is issued.

While the editors and the BSAVA have made every effort in preparing this information leaflet, the contents and any statements are made in good faith purely for general guidance and cannot be regarded as substitute for professional advice. The publishers, contributors and the BSAVA do not take responsibility for the information provided on this leaflet and hence do not accept any liability for loss or expense incurred (by you or persons that you disseminate the materials to) as a result of relying on content in this leaflet. To this end, you are advised to consult your vet and seek their professional advice before taking any steps set out in this leaflet. If you are a vet, you must not rely on the contents in this leaflet without independently verifying the correctness and veracity of the contents. BSAVA is not responsible for any alterations made to this document from the version supplied.