



Medicine series

Practice details

# Omeprazole

- 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 omeprazole. It may have a trade name such as GastroGard<sup>®</sup>, Losec<sup>®</sup>, Mepradec<sup>®</sup> or Zanol<sup>®</sup>, but often will just be called omeprazole.

## What is omeprazole?

Omeprazole belongs to a group of medicines called proton pump inhibitors. These drugs reduce gastric acid secretion in the stomach.

## Why has my pet been prescribed omeprazole?

Omeprazole is used to prevent or treat ulcers in the stomach and upper small intestine. These ulcers can develop in a variety of diseases such as kidney failure or stomach cancer. They can also be a side effect of a group of pain-relieving drugs called non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. Omeprazole is also used to help treat acid reflux from the stomach into the oesophagus.

## How should I store omeprazole?

This medicine does not require special storage conditions. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

## How do I give omeprazole tablets or capsules 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.

## How long will my pet need to take omeprazole?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients.

## What should I do if I run out of tablets or capsules?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more omeprazole from your vet if your supply is getting low. 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?

One extra dose is unlikely to hurt your pet. However, if a larger overdose is given, contact your vet as soon as possible.

## Can my pet take omeprazole 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 already know. This includes herbal or off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop, pharmacy or health store. If your pet is already taking phenytoin (a drug used to control fits) when omeprazole is prescribed the dose may need to be adjusted. Antifungal drugs, such as itraconazole, and digoxin (used in heart conditions) are affected by omeprazole and dose adjustments may be needed if used together. Check with your vet if your pet is already taking tacrolimus, mycophenolate or clopidogrel. If you have any concerns about using omeprazole with other medications, please ask your vet for further advice.

## What are the possible side effects of omeprazole for my pet?

Omeprazole may cause sickness, diarrhoea, constipation, skin rashes and tooth fractures. Long-term use may cause abnormal changes in the stomach lining; therefore, courses of omeprazole are usually limited to 8 weeks or less. 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 omeprazole?

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. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets or capsules plus their container (even if it is empty) with you.

## 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.

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### **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 omeprazole.

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