

CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: **December 2014**

Phenoxybenzamine

- **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 phenoxybenzamine. It may have a trade name such as Dibenyline®, but often will just be called phenoxybenzamine.

What is phenoxybenzamine?

Phenoxybenzamine belongs to a group of medicines called *alpha-adrenoceptor blockers*. These drugs widen ('dilate') blood vessels and this reduces blood pressure. Phenoxybenzamine also relaxes certain muscles in the body, such as those controlling the bladder.

Why has my pet been prescribed phenoxybenzamine?

Phenoxybenzamine is used in dogs and cats that have difficulty passing urine due to spasm of the lower urinary tract. The drug relieves the muscle spasm, allowing easier and more comfortable passing of urine. It is also used to treat the effects of a rare tumour of the adrenal glands called a phaeochromocytoma. This tumour causes episodes of high blood pressure and phenoxybenzamine is used to bring this back down to normal. Phenoxybenzamine is given alongside other medication before surgery to stabilize patients with a phaeochromocytoma.

How should I store phenoxybenzamine?

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 phenoxybenzamine capsules to my pet?

Phenoxybenzamine is best given with some food. Try to disguise the capsules in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, they can be placed carefully on the back of the pet's tongue and their mouth held closed until the entire capsule has been swallowed.

How long will my pet need to take phenoxybenzamine?

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 capsules?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more capsules 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?

Contact your vet immediately if your pet receives an overdose. Information regarding phenoxybenzamine overdose in veterinary patients is limited. However, in people it can cause collapse, fainting, vomiting, severe weakness and a very fast heart beat.

Can my pet take phenoxybenzamine 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 or pharmacy. In particular, you should tell your vet if your pet is taking drugs that are used to treat heart disease or liver problems. If you have any concerns about using phenoxybenzamine with other medications, please ask your own vet for further advice.

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

Phenoxybenzamine can cause low blood pressure, especially after the first dose. This leads to general weakness and dizziness. It may also cause a fast heart rate, small pinpoint pupils in the eyes and a blocked nose. Another less common side effect seen in people is vomiting. 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 phenoxybenzamine?

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 capsules, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining capsules 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 phenoxybenzamine.

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.

© British Small Animal Veterinary Association 2014. 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.