

## CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: March 2020

# Ursodeoxycholic acid

- 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 ursodeoxycholic acid. It may have a trade name such as Destolit®, Ursofalk® or Urdox®, but often will just be called ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA).

### What is ursodeoxycholic acid?

Ursodeoxycholic acid is a constituent of normal bile. Bile is a thick greenish-brown fluid produced by the liver and stored in the gall bladder (the structures involved are known as the 'biliary system'). Bile is released after eating, into the gut, to help digest and absorb food. Ursodeoxycholic acid also helps protect liver and biliary system cells against damaging toxins that are absorbed from the gut contents.

### Why has my pet been prescribed ursodeoxycholic acid?

Ursodeoxycholic acid is used to help treat certain types of liver disease that involve problems with the biliary system.

### How should I store ursodeoxycholic acid?

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 ursodeoxycholic acid tablets, capsules or suspension to my pet?

Try to disguise ursodeoxycholic acid in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, it can be placed carefully on the back of the pet's tongue and their mouth held closed until the entire dose has been swallowed.

### How long will my pet need to take ursodeoxycholic acid?

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 ursodeoxycholic acid?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more 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, contact your vet if a large overdose has been taken. Information regarding overdose in pets is limited. However, it is known that ursodeoxycholic acid overdose is unlikely to cause serious adverse effects in people.

### Can my pet take ursodeoxycholic acid 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. Certain antacids such as aluminium hydroxide and sucralfate can interfere with the absorption of ursodeoxycholic acid and therefore ursodeoxycholic acid should be given 30 minutes before or 2 hours after them.

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

Occasionally animals may vomit while on ursodeoxycholic acid. 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 ursodeoxycholic acid?

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 medication, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets, capsules or suspension 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 ursodeoxycholic acid.

#### 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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