

Amlodipine was prescribed to your pet today. Click this link for more information:

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What is this medication used for:

Amlodipine besylate is used to treat high blood pressure in cats. High blood pressure is a common consequence of numerous conditions, including kidney failure, hyperthyroidism, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, and others.

Treatment for hypertension should be considered when a cat's systolic blood pressure exceeds 160 mmHg. Blood pressures over 180 mmHg are considered high risk for causing organ damage. Amlodipine besylate may be given with or without food. Its peak activity occurs in 4-6 hours after oral administration in dogs. In cats, medication effects are seen in approximately four hours.

Amlodipine besylate is generally given once a day in cats. Expect your veterinarian to recommend periodic rechecks to measure blood pressure and evaluate the retinas for signs of bleeding.

If you miss a dose, do not double up on the next one. Give the medication when it is remembered and time the next dose accordingly.

Keep away from light and store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate.

Side Effects:

In humans, 7.3 percent of people taking this drug report headaches, which makes headaches the most common side effect of amlodipine besylate. Of course, we do not have a good way of detecting headaches in our pets.

Infrequent side effects reported in cats include elevations in renal blood parameters, drop in blood potassium levels, lethargy, increased heart rate, and weight loss. Lethargy or appetite loss could indicate that blood pressure is too low and the medication dose needs adjustment, so report any such changes to your veterinarian. Expect periodic monitoring tests to be needed. Gingival hyperplasia is a condition where the gums of the mouth overgrow, creating extra space for periodontal bacteria and infection. This side effect has been reported in 8.5% of dogs on amlodipine. The condition, when it occurs, resolves within six months of discontinuing the drug.

Interactions with Other Drugs:

Hypotension (blood pressure dropping too low) generally does not occur with amlodipine besylate unless it is combined with another drug that drops blood pressure. Other drugs of this type might include fentanyl, diuretics such as furosemide, ACE inhibitors such as enalapril, or beta-blockers such as propranolol.

The use of cyclosporine, an immunomodulator, with amlodipine besylate is likely to increase the levels of cyclosporine.

The use of amlodipine besylate with antifungal medications such as ketoconazole or itraconazole can increase the levels of amlodipine besylate.

Clopidogrel may not be as effective as a blood thinner when used concurrently with amlodipine.

Concerns and Cautions:

Missing even one dose can lead to a significant rise in blood pressure and a return of clinical symptoms of high blood pressure.

Patients with liver disease remove this drug from their systems very slowly, thus necessitating changes in dose.

Amlodipine besylate should not be used during pregnancy.

Amlodipine besylate has some (usually insignificant) effects on the heart. It will slightly reduce the strength of contraction. This could be significant in patients with a history of heart failure, and the drug should be used with caution in this situation.

The doses of amlodipine besylate for cats are small (usually quarter tablets) and it is difficult to cut tablets in appropriate sizes. A pill cutter can assist in accurately cutting pills or a compounding pharmacy can be used to formulate custom-made capsules or a flavored liquid.