Atenolol was prescribed to your pet today. Click this link for more information:
URL:
https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/doc/?id=4952998&pid=19239201305df-8bdd-44fb-9fb4-779cbcd4743b.1735593013

What is this medication used for:

Certain heart diseases, such as subaortic stenosis in dogs and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy in cats, involve the development of thickened, inflexible heart muscle. These heart diseases can benefit from what is called beta-blockade. This means that atenolol can relax the stiff heart muscle and slow the heart rate, allowing for more efficient filling of the heart chambers. Atenolol might also be used in the treatment of high blood pressure or to treat heart arrhythmias where the heart rhythm is simply too fast and the heart does not have time to properly fill between beats. Sometimes atenolol is used in preparing feline patients for surgical treatment of hyperthyroidism, where there is often heart disease as described.

Side Effects:

Atenolol is given when the heart rate needs to be slowed down and/or when blood pressure needs to be dropped.

The most common side effects are listlessness, diarrhea, and possibly vomiting. These issues should be mild and temporary and, as long as they are mild and temporary, they should not be concerning. If these side effects seem overly problematic, consult your veterinarian.

More serious side effects involve the heart rate and/or blood pressure dropping too low and creating actual fainting spells or collapse. If anything like this is seen, notify your veterinarian at once.

Atenolol can interfere with blood sugar regulation in diabetic patients.

Other beta blockers have created problems facilitating airway constriction in asthmatic patients but atenolol, being specific to beta-1 receptors at usual doses, should not have this problem. That said, atenolol should be used cautiously in patients with asthma.

Interactions with Other Drugs:

There are a fair number of medications that can interact with atenolol so it is important that your veterinarian knows all the medications your pet is taking.

The action of atenolol can be blocked by drugs that work to encourage the sympathetic nervous system. Similarly, atenolol, as a beta blocker, may block or interfere with the effects of other drugs. Such drugs include phenylpropanolamine (used for urinary incontinence) and terbutaline (an airway dilator).

Atenolol can lower blood pressure. Combining atenolol with other medications that drop blood pressure can create a much greater drop in blood pressure than expected. Such medications include prazosin, amlodipine (or other similar calcium channel blockers), and acepromazine (a common tranquilizer).

Antacids may reduce GI absorption of atenolol. They should be given several hours apart.

Furosemide, a common diuretic, can exacerbate atenolol's potential to disrupt blood sugar regulation.

Concerns and Cautions:

Atenolol should not be used in patients with heart failure. These patients need their hearts to be beating with appropriate strength and speed and they can become unstable if this is disrupted.

Atenolol can disrupt blood sugar control in diabetic patients.

Atenolol should be stored at room temperature and protected from light.

Atenolol should be avoided in patients with kidney failure.

Atenolol is typically given twice daily. It may be given with or without food. If a dose is accidentally skipped, simply pick up at the next scheduled dose.

If side effects become a problem or if the decision is made to discontinue atenolol for some other reason, atenolol should not be abruptly stopped. It should be tapered off over 1-2 weeks.