Carprofen was prescribed to your pet today. Click this link for more information:
URL:
https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/doc/?id=4951499&pid=192393718722d-f61a-4390-9c17-cc90ad9d1b57.1735576807

What is this medication used for:

Carprofen is a member of the class of drugs known as NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs). This class of drug is used for pain relief successfully in humans but the development of safe NSAIDs for dogs has only been achieved relatively recently and continues to be problematic in the cat. Carprofen can be given as one single daily dose or the daily dose can be divided such that half is given in the morning and half in the evening.

Carprofen is approved only for canine use and was designed for long term use in dogs. Cats are more sensitive to NSAID side effects than dogs and require different pain relief regimens. This drug should not be used in cats. Carprofen may be given with or without food. If a dose is accidentally skipped, do not double up on the next dose but simply give the dose when it is remembered and time the next dose accordingly.

Side Effects

Stomach upset: vomiting, diarrhea, and/or appetite loss are the important side effects to watch for, especially in the three weeks or so after beginning long term carprofen. These symptoms can have multiple meanings so it is important to sort them out.

Some dogs are simply sensitive to NSAIDs. These dogs simply need nausea relief in the short term and a different pain management regimen after recovery. Some dogs have an unrecognized liver problem. Carprofen is removed from the body by the liver which means that the liver on carprofen has extra work. This is not a problem for a normal liver but a diseased liver could be tipped into failure from the extra load. This is why screening tests are so important prior to long term use.

If a dog on carprofen develops an upset stomach, discontinue the medication and report the problem to your veterinarian.

Interactions with other Drugs:

Different drugs of the NSAID class should not be used together as the potential for NSAID side effects increases. This means greater chance of exactly what we had hoped to avoid by using a COX-preferential NSAID instead of a non-preferential NSAID: stomach irritation/ulceration, altered kidney function, inappropriate bleeding.

For similar reasons, NSAIDS should not be used in conjunction with corticosteroid hormones such as

prednisone, dexamethasone, etc. A 5 to 7 day rest period is recommended when changing over from corticosteroids to carprofen or when changing from carprofen to another NSAID.

Allow at least one week between prednisone and carprofen.

If carprofen is used concurrently with phenobarbital, it is especially important that appropriate liver monitoring be performed.

ACE inhibitors such as enalapril or benazepril may not be as effective in the presence of carprofen (ACE inhibitors are used to treat hypertension or heart failure). This is because ACE inhibitors depend on the dilation of blood vessels in the kidneys and such dilation can be interfered with by NSAIDs.

Concerns and Cautions:

Carprofen is available as a chewable tablet which is highly palatable to animals. This increases the potential for accidental overdose should a pet gain access to a large amount of chewable tablets. Keep chewable carprofen out of the reach of children and pets.

Carprofen has not been tested in pregnant or nursing females and thus is not recommended for use in such individuals, particularly since COX-2 is important in reproductive function. Carprofen should not be used in dogs with pre-existing liver or kidney disease. In order to screen for pre-existing liver or kidney disease it is a good idea to run a blood chemistry panel prior to starting long term carprofen.

Any dog on long-term medication of any kind should probably have blood chemistry rechecks every 6 months.

Carprofen should not be used in patients with pre-existing GI ulcerations.