

CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: **March 2020**

Allopurinol

- **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 is called allopurinol. It may have a trade name such as Zyloric®, Caplenal®, Cosuric® or Rimapurinol®, but often will just be called allopurinol.

What is allopurinol?

Allopurinol belongs to a group of medicines called *xanthine oxidase inhibitors*. These drugs decrease the production of a substance called uric acid. Excess uric acid levels in the body cause gout in people. In dogs excess uric acid leads to the formation of certain types of bladder stones (also called uroliths or calculi). Certain parasites need to produce uric acid in order to survive.

Why has my pet been prescribed allopurinol?

Allopurinol is used to treat and prevent a condition in dogs called urate urolithiasis, where excess levels of uric acid have led to the presence of bladder stones (uroliths). This condition can cause recurrent cystitis. Your pet may strain or have difficulty in passing urine, and urination can often be painful and more frequent than normal. You may also notice blood in your pet's urine. Smaller uroliths can also occur lower down the urinary tract and partially obstruct the flow of urine. It is possible for uroliths to block the outflow of urine completely, and this is considered a medical emergency. Allopurinol can also be used in combination with other drugs to help treat a parasitic disease called leishmaniosis that is spread by bites from sandflies. Pets that have lived abroad or travelled outside the UK are at most risk of this infection.

How should I store allopurinol?

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 allopurinol tablets to my pet?

Ideally, allopurinol is best given after a main meal. Try to disguise the tablets in a small amount 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 tablet has been swallowed.

How long will my pet need to take allopurinol?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients and can be for the rest of their life.

What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more tablets 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 an overdose is given. Currently there is limited information available regarding the signs of allopurinol overdose in dogs.

Can my pet take allopurinol 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. There is limited information available about the possible interactions of allopurinol with other drugs. However, it is known that in people taking ampicillin or amoxicillin, allopurinol can increase the risk of a skin rash. Allopurinol may also

increase the effects and side effects of azathioprine (used to treat some immune-mediated diseases) and theophylline (used to treat respiratory disease). If you have any concerns about using allopurinol with other medications, please ask your vet for further advice.

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

There is limited information available regarding the side effects of allopurinol in dogs and it is generally safe. One important side effect is the development of urine stones (xanthine), especially when not combined with an appropriate 'urate preventing' prescription diet, which can cause blockages in the kidney or bladder. However, skin rashes, vomiting, diarrhoea and drowsiness have been known to occur in people taking this drug. 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 allopurinol?

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

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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