

CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: March 2020

Levetiracetam

- 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 levetiracetam. It may have a trade name such as Desitrend® or Keppra®, but often will just be called levetiracetam (or levetirasetam or S-etiracetam).

What is levetiracetam?

Levetiracetam is a relatively new drug and belongs to a group of medicines called *anti-epileptics*. These drugs act in the brain to prevent fits.

Why has my pet been prescribed levetiracetam?

Levetiracetam is used in cats and dogs to help prevent fits (seizures) when the patient has not responded to other more commonly used drugs. It can be used alone or in combination with other anti-epileptic drugs.

How should I store levetiracetam?

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 levetiracetam tablets or oral solution to my pet?

Try to disguise the levetiracetam 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 levetiracetam?

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 may be for the rest of their life.

What should I do if I run out of tablets or solution?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more tablets or solution 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. **Levetiracetam should not be stopped suddenly; the dose needs to be gradually reduced whilst another anti-epileptic drug is introduced to avoid fits recurring or becoming more frequent.**

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If you do miss a dose, give your pet the dose that they should have had **straight away**. Make sure the next dose is separated by at least 6 hours before reverting to normal dosing time. **DO NOT** give double doses to make up for missed doses.

What should I do if my pet is accidentally given too many doses?

Contact your vet immediately if your pet is given an overdose of levetiracetam. Information regarding overdose of this drug is limited in veterinary patients. However, overdose is known to cause drowsiness in people.

Can my pet take levetiracetam 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.

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

There is limited information about the side effects of levetiracetam in dogs and cats, although drowsiness has been seen. Other side effects reported include ataxia (wobbliness) in dogs, and reduced appetite, lethargy and hypersalivation (increased drooling) in cats. In people, side effects include weakness, dizziness and abnormalities of white blood cells. 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 levetiracetam?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, contact your vet as soon as possible for advice. **Levetiracetam should not be stopped suddenly as fits may recur or become more frequent.**

What should I do if a person accidentally takes this drug?

If a person accidentally takes your pet's medicine, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets or solution 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 levetiracetam.

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.

© British Small Animal Veterinary Association 2020. While the editors and the BSAVA have made every effort in preparing this information leaflet, the contents and any statements are made in good faith purely for general guidance and cannot be regarded as substitute for professional advice. The publishers, contributors and the BSAVA do not take responsibility for the information provided on this leaflet and hence do not accept any liability for loss or expense incurred (by you or persons that you disseminate the materials to) as a result of relying on content in this leaflet. To this end, you are advised to consult your vet and seek their professional advice before taking any steps set out in this leaflet. If you are a vet, you must not rely on the contents in this leaflet without independently verifying the correctness and veracity of the contents. BSAVA is not responsible for any alterations made to this document from the version supplied.