

Atropine Sulfate, Ophthalmic

(ah-troe-peen suhl-fate)

Category: Cycloplegic-Mydriatic Agent

Other Names for this Medication: Isopto® Atropine

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** Atropine Ophthalmic Solution 1%; Atropine Ophthalmic Ointment 1%.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication. It is to help answer commonly asked questions and help you give the medication safely and effectively to your animal. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Key Information

- ▶ Used to dilate (enlarge) the pupil after surgical procedures (eg, cataracts) or to reduce pain in the eye caused by eye muscle spasm (eg, uveitis, moon blindness in horses). Usually used 2-3 times daily at first and then once a day to once every other day to keep pupil dilated.
- ▶ May cause excessive salivation (drooling) due to the bitter taste if licked or groomed. Do not allow this medication to get in your animal's mouth.
- ▶ Keep animals out of bright sunlight during use.
- ▶ Use proper administration techniques to avoid contamination of the medication. Keep cap tightly closed when not in use.
- ▶ Wait 5 minutes after applying atropine before applying any other medications to the eye.
- ▶ Wash hands after use to prevent it from affecting your eyes.

How is this medication useful?

Atropine sulfate causes the muscles of the eye to relax and is useful in dilating the pupil during and after surgical procedures. It is also used to decrease eye pain caused by eye muscle spasm.

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in humans but it is not officially approved for use in animals in the USA. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe products containing this drug in different species or for other conditions in certain situations. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this drug is the most appropriate choice.

What should I tell my veterinarian to see if this medication can be safely given to my pet?

- ▶ Many things might affect how well this drug will work in your animal. Be sure to discuss the following with your veterinarian so together you can make the best treatment decisions.
- ▶ Other drugs can interact with this medication, so be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including other eye medications, vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you give your animal, including the amount and time you give each.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your animal may have now or has had in the past.
- ▶ If your animal has been treated for the same condition in the past, tell your veterinarian about the treatment and how well it worked or didn't work.
- ▶ If your animal is pregnant or nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this drug.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian and pharmacist about any medication side effects (including allergic reactions, lack of appetite, diarrhea, itching, hair loss) your animal has developed in the past.

When should this drug not be used or be used very carefully?

No drug is 100% safe in all patients, but your veterinarian will discuss with you any specific concerns about using this drug in your animal.

This drug **SHOULD NOT** be used in patients:

- ▶ That are allergic to it or drugs like it (eg, scopolamine).
- ▶ With primary glaucoma.

This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in patients:

- ▶ Colicky horses.
- ▶ Animals that are pregnant or nursing.

If your animal matches any of these concerns, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks of using the medication versus the benefits that it might have.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Side effects that usually are not serious include:

- ▶ Temporary stinging or burning when first applied.
- ▶ Blurred vision, especially from ointment forms.
- ▶ Sensitivity to bright light.

If any of these are severe, worsen or continue to be a problem, contact your veterinarian.

Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:

- ▶ Rash, itching, swelling (especially of the face, tongue, throat), severe dizziness, trouble breathing.
- ▶ Fast or irregular heartbeat.
- ▶ Constipation or signs of colic in horses.

If you see any of these, contact your veterinarian immediately.

If my animal gets too much of this medication (an overdose), what should I do?

When this drug is used as an eye medication, overdoses are not likely. But side effects or toxic effects could occur if your animal eats the medication. If this happens contact your veterinarian or an animal poison control center for further advice. Animal poison control centers that are open 24 hours a day include ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) and Pet Poison HELPLINE (855-764-7661); a consultation fee may be charged for these services.

How should this medication be given?

For this medication to work, give it exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. It's a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.

- ▶ Administer this drug to your animal's eye in the exact amount that your veterinarian has prescribed.
- ▶ Do not allow the dropper to touch any part of your animal's eye.
- ▶ If any residue is left on your animal's face after giving the eye drops, gently wipe it off with a damp cloth or tissue.

- ▶ If you are administering more than one eye medication to your animal, wait 5 minutes between each medication before giving the next one.
- ▶ If you are having difficulty applying the medication or your animal does not accept the treatment, ask your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help with administration and reducing the stress of medication time.
- ▶ This medication can be given for various lengths of time. Be sure you understand how long your veterinarian wants you to continue giving this medication. Prescription refills may be necessary before the therapy will be complete. Before stopping this medication, talk to your veterinarian, as there may be important reasons to continue its use.

What should I do if I miss giving a dose of this medication?

If you miss a dose, give it when you remember, but if it is close to the time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and give it at the next scheduled time. After that, return to the regular dosing schedule. Do not double-up or give extra doses.

How should I store this medication?

- ▶ Store this medication in the original prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder container (ie, pill minder) at room temperature and protected from light. Do not allow this medication to freeze.
- ▶ If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the storage recommendations and expiration date for the product.
- ▶ Keep away from children and other animals.

Can handling this medication be hazardous to me, my family, or other pets?

There are no specific precautions required when handling this medication unless you are allergic to it or other drugs like it (eg, scopolamine), but it is always a good idea to wash your hands after handling any medication. If you do get this medication in your eyes, it will cause the pupil to dilate but this is not a serious condition unless you have glaucoma.

How should I dispose of this medication if I don't use it all?

- ▶ Do not flush this medication down the toilet or wash it down the sink. If a community drug “take-back” program is available, use this option. If there is no take-back program, mix the drug with coffee grounds or cat litter (to make it undesirable to children and animals and unrecognizable to people who might go through your trash), place the mixture in a sealable plastic bag to keep it from leaking out, and throw the bag out with the regular trash.
- ▶ Do not save left over medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?

- ▶ Use of this drug may not be allowed in certain animal competitions. Check rules and regulations before entering your animal in a competition while this medication is being administered.

If you have any other questions or concerns about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.