

Dalteparin

(dahl-tep-ah-rin)

Category: Anticoagulant; Blood Thinner

Other Names for this Medication: Fragmin®, Low Molecular Weight Heparin (LMWH), Fractionated Heparin

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. **Human:** Dalteparin is available in several different concentrations for injection.

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

- ▶ This drug must be injected under the skin (subcutaneously; SC); be sure you understand how to properly give the injections (shots); shots may be painful.
- ▶ Several shots a day may be required.
- ▶ Bleeding is uncommon, but can occur. Contact your veterinarian immediately if it happens.
- ▶ If your animal is listless (lacking energy or interest in things), appears to be having trouble breathing or walking, or loses the use of its rear legs, contact your veterinarian immediately.

How is this medication useful?

Dalteparin is a blood thinner that is used to prevent blood clots in animals. It may also be given before surgery to prevent blood clot formation.

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. 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?

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.

- ▶ Tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you are giving your animal, as well as the amount and schedule of each.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your pet may have now or has had in the past.
- ▶ If your animal has been treated for the same disease or condition in the past, tell your veterinarian about the treatment and how well it did 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 pet has developed in the past.

When should this medication 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 pork products or have had an allergic reaction to this drug or related drugs (eg, heparin, or enoxaparin).

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

- ▶ That have low platelet counts or other conditions where bleeding can occur.
- ▶ With kidney disease.

If your animal matches any of these conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the possible risks of using the drug versus the benefits.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Common but not serious side effects include:

- ▶ Pain, redness, and itching at the injection site.

You don't have to be overly concerned if you see any of these signs unless they are severe, worsen, or continue to be a problem. Contact your veterinarian if this happens.

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

- ▶ Excessive bleeding usually does not occur with this medication, but it is possible. Do not allow your pet to be in situations where it might be injured or cut.
- ▶ Excessive itching, swelling of the face or throat, or trouble breathing may indicate an allergic reaction.
- ▶ Fever.

If your pet experiences any of these signs, contact your veterinarian immediately.

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

It is important to follow the label instructions exactly as overdoses can cause significant bleeding. If you witness or suspect an overdose, 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 is 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.

- ▶ Because this drug must be injected (shots), be sure you understand the proper dosage, location, and method for giving the shots. Dalteparin should only be injected under the skin (subcutaneously) and not into a muscle or vein. A very small needle provided by your pharmacist or veterinarian is used. Most animal owners administer it with insulin syringes.
- ▶ Use a new needle and syringe for each injection; do not reuse needles and syringes.
- ▶ Dalteparin is a very potent drug and given in very small amounts; make sure your pharmacist or veterinarian shows you exactly how much to inject every day.
- ▶ Do not shake the vial as this may break up the very fragile drug molecule and destroy the effectiveness of the drug.
- ▶ Change the injection (shot) site daily and do not give it too many times in the same spot.
- ▶ Don't use any medication that has changed colors or has specks in it.
- ▶ 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?

It is important to give dalteparin as directed or clots can form. 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 dose.

How should I store this medication?

- ▶ The injection can be stored at room temperature, however if your veterinarian or pharmacist has drawn the medicine into syringes, they may suggest it be stored in the refrigerator.
- ▶ Open vials should be discarded after 30 days.
- ▶ 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, but be careful to avoid accidental needle sticks. Be sure to dispose of used syringes and needles properly. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can assist you in obtaining a safe sharps container.

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 leftover medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?

- ▶ If you are giving these shots at home, place used needles and syringes in a sharps disposal container immediately after they have been used. Your veterinarian or pharmacist will help you obtain these containers. Be careful not to accidentally stick yourself; do not attempt to disconnect the needle from the syringe. Keep containers out of reach of children and pets. Once about $\frac{3}{4}$ full, dispose containers according to your community guidelines. Check with your local trash removal services or health department (listed online and in the city or county government [blue] pages in your phone book) to see which disposal methods are available in your area.
- ▶ Many pain medications (eg, aspirin, carprofen, etodolac, deracoxib) as well as other drugs that affect blood clotting (eg, warfarin, clopidogrel) can also prevent the blood from clotting. Do not use any other medications, even those purchased without a prescription, in your animal without first consulting your veterinarian.
- ▶ 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.