

Neomycin

(nee-o-mye-sin)

Category: Aminoglycoside Antibiotic

Other Names for this Medication: Biosol®, Neomix®

Common Dosage Forms: **Veterinary:** Oral Liquid: 200 mg/mL. **Human:** Tablets: 500 mg.

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

- ▶ Neomycin is an oral antibiotic used to reduce bacteria in the GI tract before surgery or to reduce ammonia-producing bacteria. It should not be given to hamsters, rabbits, or hares.
- ▶ Neomycin may be given by mouth with or without food. If your pet vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ When given orally for short periods, neomycin is usually well tolerated. Neomycin can damage hearing (particularly in cats), nerves, and kidneys when used long term or in animals that have intestinal ulcers.
- ▶ Neomycin may cause diarrhea.

How is this medication useful?

Neomycin is an antibiotic given orally to reduce bacteria in the intestines before intestinal surgery. In dogs and cats with severe liver problems, neomycin may be used to reduce ammonia-producing bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract.

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved oral neomycin for use in humans and food-producing animals (eg, cattle), but there are no approved neomycin products for dogs, cats, or horses. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe and use 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.

- ▶ Other drugs can interact with this drug, so be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including 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 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 animal 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:

- ▶ Animals that are allergic to it or drugs like it (eg, gentamicin, amikacin). Cats may be more at risk for neomycin allergy than other animals.
- ▶ Rabbits and hares. Neomycin can cause fatal diarrhea in these animals.
- ▶ Animals with a blockage in their stomach or intestines.

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

- ▶ Animals with kidney disease.
- ▶ Very young or very old animals.
- ▶ Working or service dogs; neomycin can (rarely) cause irreversible hearing loss.
- ▶ Horses, especially foals. Neomycin may cause severe diarrhea.

If your animal has any of these conditions or signs, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks versus benefits.

What are the side effects of this medication?

When injected (given by a shot), neomycin can be very toxic. However, when given by mouth or by an enema, very little, if any, of the drug is absorbed into the body. Chances for side effects increase if the drug is used for long periods or if animals have intestinal ulcers or inflammation.

Side effects that usually are not serious include:

- ▶ Diarrhea and loose stools.

You don't have to be overly concerned if you see this sign unless it is severe, worsens, or continues to be a problem. Contact your veterinarian if this happens.

Rare side effects (when used by mouth in dogs and cats) that may be serious or indicate a serious problem include:

- ▶ Excessive itchiness (in cats, excessive grooming), swelling of face or tongue, and/or labored or noisy breathing may indicate a severe allergic reaction.
- ▶ Severe diarrhea.
- ▶ Urinating more or less often than usual.
- ▶ Head tilt, loss of balance, or trouble hearing.
- ▶ Weakness or trouble moving.

Contact your veterinarian immediately if your animal has any of these signs.

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

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: **Pet Poison HELPLINE** (855-764-7661) and **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** (888-426-4435); 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.

- ▶ The drug may be given either with food or on an empty stomach. If your pet vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ Liquid forms of neomycin must be measured carefully. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can help by providing special measuring spoons or syringes.
- ▶ If you have difficulty getting your animal to take the medicine, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help with dosing 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 tablets or capsules in the original prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder container (ie, pill minder) at room temperature and protected from light.
- ▶ Oral liquid should be stored at room temperature tight, light-resistant containers.
- ▶ If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the storage recommendations and expiration date.
- ▶ 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. Wash your hands after handling any medication.

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.