

Omeprazole

(oh-meh-prah-zahl)

Category: Stomach acid reducer (Proton Pump Inhibitor)

Other Names for this Medication: Gastrogard®, Prilosec®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: 2.28 gram syringe oral paste. **Human:** 10 mg, 20 mg, & 40 mg delayed-release capsules; 20 mg delayed-release tablets; combination products with sodium bicarbonate.

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 treat or prevent stomach ulcers; usually only short-term.
- ▶ Works best if given before the first meal of the day.
- ▶ Do not open capsules, break or cut tablets unless instructed to. Talk with your veterinarian or pharmacist if you need a different dosage form.

How is this medication useful?

Omeprazole is a medication that is used to prevent and/or treat stomach ulcers.

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in horses and humans. The FDA does allow veterinarians to prescribe and use products containing this drug in other animal species 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 omeprazole, so tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, and herbal therapies) you are giving your animal, including the amount and schedule of each.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your animal may have or 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, may become pregnant or is nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this drug. Omeprazole can possibly reduce the birth weight of animals born to a mother receiving 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 patients:

- ▶ That have had an allergic reaction to it or similar drugs in the past.

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

- ▶ With liver or kidney disease.
- ▶ That are pregnant or nursing.

What are the side effects of this medication?

- ▶ Omeprazole is generally tolerated well by dogs, cats, and horses, but it could cause vomiting (not in horses), decreased appetite (eating less), excessive gas, and diarrhea.
- ▶ There is one report of a horse showing signs of skin itchiness after getting the drug.

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

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

Usually overdoses of omeprazole are not serious, but if you know or think your animal got too much of this medication and they are showing adverse effects, 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. Do not cut or break tablets unless instructed to by your veterinarian or pharmacist. It's a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.
- ▶ Omeprazole should be given about 30 minutes before a meal, generally the first meal of the day. If your animal vomits or acts sick after getting it on an empty stomach, give it with the meal instead. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ The paste for horses should be given as directed by the veterinarian. The person giving the paste should pay attention to the marks on the handle of the tube. If you are not giving a whole tube of paste each dose, your veterinarian will show you exactly where to dial the ring on the tube to avoid overdosing your horse.
- ▶ Omeprazole is usually not used for longer than 4 weeks in dogs and cats or 90 days in horses. If the benefits outweigh the risks, however, it may be given for longer.

- ▶ Compounded liquid forms of this medication 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 dosing and reducing the stress of medication time.
- ▶ This medication can be given for various lengths of time. Be sure you understand how long the 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, wait and give the next dose when it is usually time to do so. Do not double-up doses or give an extra dose.

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, out of direct sunlight. Keep away from children and other animals.
- ▶ Liquids should be stored exactly as recommended and discarded by the date shown on the prescription bottle.

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?

- ▶ Omeprazole is available OTC (over-the-counter, without a prescription). Do not give omeprazole (or any other OTC medications) to your animal without first consulting a veterinarian.
- ▶ Do not change or switch dosage forms without first consulting with a veterinarian or pharmacist, as the dose may not be the same.
- ▶ 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.