

## CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: May 2011

# Amlodipine

- **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 amlodipine. It may have a trade name such as Istin® or Amlostin®, but often will just be called amlodipine.

### What is amlodipine?

Amlodipine belongs to a group of medicines called *calcium channel blockers*. These drugs relax the walls of blood vessels to lower blood pressure. Amlodipine also slightly slows down the heart beat. The combined effects reduce the heart's overall workload.

### Why has my pet been prescribed amlodipine?

Amlodipine is mainly used to treat hypertension (high blood pressure) in cats and dogs.

### How should I store amlodipine?

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 amlodipine tablets to my pet?

Amlodipine tablets can be put in a small amount of food that your pet likes and given to your pet before their main dinner. Alternatively, the tablets can be placed carefully on the back of your pet's tongue and their mouth held closed until the entire tablet has been swallowed.

### How long will my pet need to take amlodipine?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This varies between patients and can be for the rest of a pet's life. Your pet's blood pressure will

need to be monitored regularly while they are taking amlodipine.

### What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more tablets from your vet if your supply is getting low. If you do run out, contact your vet for further advice and restart the course as soon as possible.

### What should I do if I miss a dose?

If a dose is missed just give the next dose at the normal time. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed tablet(s).

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

**Contact your vet immediately** as an overdose of amlodipine can be very serious. Large doses may cause weakness, collapse and fainting due to low blood pressure and an abnormal heart beat.

### Can my pet take amlodipine 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. Do not give amlodipine to your pet if they are already taking cimetidine (a drug used to treat stomach ulcers). Amlodipine needs to be used with care alongside other heart drugs that also act to

reduce blood pressure (ACE inhibitors), slow the heart rate (beta-blockers) and remove excess fluid from the body (diuretics). Your vet will be able to provide further advice about using these medications with amlodipine.

### What are the possible side effects of amlodipine for my pet?

Side effects are rare but amlodipine can cause lethargy, loss of appetite and generalized weakness (due to low blood pressure). If your pet shows *any* unusual symptoms whilst taking this medication, please contact your vet.

### What should I do if my animal is unwell while taking amlodipine?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, you should not give any further doses and should contact your vet as soon as possible for advice.

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

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

#### 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.

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