

CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: May 2011

Busulfan

- **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 busulfan. It may have a trade name such as Myleran®, but often will just be called busulfan (or busulphan).

What is busulfan?

Busulfan belongs to a group of medicines called *alkylating drugs*, which are a type of *cytotoxic* drug. Cytotoxic drugs have both anti-cancer activity and the potential to damage normal tissue; their use is sometimes referred to as 'chemotherapy'. They may be used to help cure cancer, or to prolong life by relieving symptoms of an incurable cancer. Cytotoxic drugs are often used in combination with several other drugs and may be used alongside radiotherapy or surgery to treat cancer.

Why has my pet been prescribed busulfan?

Busulfan is used in veterinary patients to help treat certain types of cancer, including those affecting bone marrow and blood cells.

How should I store busulfan?

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 busulfan tablets to my pet?

Disposable gloves must be worn at all times when handling and administering this drug. Disguise the tablets in a small quantity of a strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. ***Faeces, urine and saliva from dogs and cats taking busulfan will contain small traces of the drug. Therefore, do not allow your pet to lick your skin (including hands and face) and make sure they go to the toilet well away from other pets and from people. Wear disposable gloves when picking up faeces in bags. Dispose of faeces in domestic waste.***

How long will my pet need to take busulfan?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients. Unused tablets and empty containers should be returned to your veterinary practice for safe disposal.

What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try not to run out of tablets. Make sure you order more from your vet if your supply is getting low. If you do run out, contact your own 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 if your pet is given an overdose of busulfan.

Can my pet take busulfan 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 your pet busulfan if they are already taking metronidazole (an antibiotic). If your pet is already taking phenytoin (used to control epilepsy) or digoxin (used in some heart problems) check with your vet before giving them busulfan at the same time.

What are the possible side effects of busulfan for my pet?

Cytotoxic drugs such as busulfan have the potential to cause a sore mouth, nausea and vomiting. Additional drugs are available to prevent the nausea and vomiting, or treat it if it arises. Busulfan may suppress bone marrow production of white and red blood cells, leaving the patient susceptible to other infections. Occasionally this bone marrow suppression may become irreversible. For these reasons your pet will require regular blood tests to monitor blood cell numbers. In people, hyperpigmentation (darkening of the skin), lung damage and liver damage are also reported to be potential side effects. If your pet shows *any* unusual symptoms whilst taking this medication, please contact your vet.

What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking busulfan?

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 busulfan.

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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