Plumb's Drug Handouts

Metronidazole

(*me-troe-ni-da-zole*)

Key Information

- Metronidazole helps to treat infections caused by some bacteria and protozoal parasites.
- Give with or without food. Giving with food may help prevent stomach upset.
- Common side effects include vomiting, diarrhea, decreased appetite, and drowsiness.
- This medication can cause nervous system side effects, especially at higher doses. Contact your veterinarian if your animal has any changes in behavior or coordination.
- It is important to finish the entire course of treatment, even if your animal starts feeling better.

Note: The purpose of this information sheet is to answer commonly asked questions. It does not contain all available information for this medication and is not a substitute for medical advice provided by your veterinary healthcare team.

Description	• Antibiotic and antiprotozoal • Available as tablets, capsules, and oral suspensions
Other common names	*Ayradia*, *Flagyl*
Uses	FDA-approved uses in animals: • Treatment of *Giardia* infections in dogs At the discretion of your veterinarian, this medication may be used in different species or for other reasons (extra-label use), such as: • Treatment of other protozoal infections and some bacterial infections in dogs and cats • Treatment of inflammatory bowel disease in dogs and cats
Before this medication is given	No medication is 100% safe in all patients. Discuss with your veterinarian: • Any other medications or supplements your animal is taking • Any conditions or diseases your animal currently has or has had in the past • Any side effects your animal has had to medications in the past • The risks of using this medication if your animal is pregnant or nursing
Warnings for animals	Do **not** use: • In animals that are allergic to it Use with **caution** in: • Animals with liver problems • Working animals that rely on their sense of smell. Metronidazole may temporarily reduce their ability to detect odors. Certain medications are not allowed in some animal competitions. Check rules and regulations when your animal is taking a medication.
Warnings for humans	• Wash your hands after handling any medication . • If your skin comes into contact with your animal's saliva within 5 minutes after administration, wash the area to prevent irritation.
How do I give this medication?	• Give with or without food. Giving with food may help prevent stomach upset. • This medication is very bitter tasting. Wrapping tablets and capsules in strong smelling food may make it easier to give. • If using a liquid, shake well before each dose. • Measure liquids using an oral syringe, medicine cup, or dosing spoon. Do not use household measuring devices.

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	Give exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. Always follow the instructions on the prescription label.
Side effects	**Common** – contact your veterinarian if any of these signs are severe, continue to occur, or worsen over time: • Vomiting, diarrhea, or decreased appetite • Weakness or drowsiness **Severe** – stop the medication and contact your veterinarian immediately if you notice any of these signs: • Difficulty walking, loss of coordination, head tilt, or seizures • Complete loss of appetite, especially in cats • Yellowing of the skin, whites of the eyes, or gums (*jaundice*)
How will I know it's working?	• Your animal should start feeling better within 1 to 2 days. *Contact your veterinary clinic if your animal's signs worsen or do not improve.*
How long will the medication effects last?	• This medication will stop working within 24 hours of the last dose. • It may last longer if your animal has reduced liver function.
How long do I give it for?	This medication can be given for different lengths of time. Give it for as long as your veterinarian tells you. You may need to refill the prescription.
Overdose	Signs of overdose may include loss of appetite, vomiting, depression, disorientation, loss of coordination, and seizures. Overdoses may result in damage to the nervous system and liver. If you witness or suspect an overdose, call your veterinarian or an animal-specific poison control center (consultation fee applies): • **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center**: (888) 426-4435 • **Pet Poison Helpline**: (855) 764-7661 *Have the product or label with you if possible.*
Missed dose	In most cases, if you miss a dose: • Give it when you remember, then return to the regular dosing schedule. If it is close to the time for the next dose: • Skip the missed dose. • Give the next dose at the next scheduled time. • Continue the regular dosing schedule. *If you are unsure, call your veterinary clinic. Do not double-up or give extra doses.*
Storage	• Store in the original container at room temperature. • Protect from light. • Keep out of reach of children and animals.
Disposal	Do **not** flush this medication down the toilet or wash it down the sink. Options for disposing of unused or expired medications include: • Drug take-back sites: This is preferred whenever possible. To find a site near you, contact your local law enforcement or waste management authorities. • Home disposal: Mix the medication in with coffee grounds or kitty litter, seal the mixture in a plastic bag, and throw it away in the trash. *Do **not** save leftover medication or give it to others to use.*
Questions?	Talk to your veterinarian.

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