

Praziquantel

(pra-zi-kwon-tel)

Description: Antiparasitic

Other Names for this Medication: Droncit®

Common Dosage Forms:

Veterinary: Tablets: 23 mg (cats); 34 mg (dogs). Praziquantel is also found in several combination products for dogs, cats, and horses. An injectable form is available for veterinarian use only. **Human:** Tablets: 600 mg.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication and has not been reviewed by FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine. This sheet can help answer commonly asked questions but is not a substitute for medical advice. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Key Information

- Can be given with or without food; tablets may be crushed or mixed with food.
- Side effects are rare if the drug is given by mouth, but loss of appetite, drooling (in cats), vomiting, lethargy (lack of energy), and diarrhea are possible.
- Dead worms are not typically seen in feces after treatment.

How is this medication useful?

Praziquantel is used to kill intestinal tapeworms and some other types of parasites. The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved praziquantel for use in dogs and cats for the treatment of tapeworms. 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 affect the way this drug works, 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.

How long until I will know if this medication is working, and how long will the effects of this medication last?

This medication should start having effects within 1 to 2 hours; however, you will not see the effects of this medication outwardly. Your veterinarian will need to run further tests to determine if the medication is working appropriately. The effects of this medication are moderate in duration, meaning they may last for a few days, although the benefits may be prolonged if your animal has decreased kidney and/or liver function.

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 in your animal.

This drug **SHOULD NOT** be used in:

- Animals that are allergic to it.
- Puppies fewer than 4 weeks old and kittens fewer than 6 weeks old. Some products may be safe for these animals; ask your veterinarian before treating with these products.

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

What are the side effects of this medication?

When given by mouth side effects are rare.

Side effects that are not serious include:

- Loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea.
- Salivation (drooling) in cats.
- Lack of energy.

You don't have to be overly concerned if you see any of these signs 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?

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 animal vomits shortly after getting the dose, contact your veterinarian for instructions. Do not withhold food after treatment.
- Your veterinarian may recommend that you repeat the treatment a few weeks later to make sure all of the parasites have been eliminated.
- 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.
- Watch your animal for a few minutes after giving the medication to make sure the entire treatment is swallowed.
- Be sure you understand whether your veterinarian wants you to continue giving this medication on a regularly scheduled basis for good parasite control. Prescription refills may be necessary. 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 and then wait the amount of time between doses recommended by your veterinarian before giving another dose. Do not double-up or give extra doses.

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 and protected from light.
- If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the storage recommendations and expiration date for the product.
- Keep away from children and other animals.

Can handling this medication be hazardous to me, my family, or other animals?

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 leftover medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?

- For most animals, the dead worms are digested; however, if your animal had many tapeworms, some may be seen in the feces.
- 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 about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.