

Probiotics

(pro-bye-ot-icks)

Description:

Supplement containing beneficial bacteria

Other Names for this Medication:

Fortiflora, Provable DC, Sivomixx 800, Visbiome, and others

Common Dosage Forms:

Veterinary: Chewable tablets, capsules, powder packets, and more. **Human:** Many products exist for human use.

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

- Probiotics are live, beneficial bacteria.
- Used to support digestive health or help manage diarrhea
- Usually well tolerated, but stomach upset is possible
- Do not switch brands from that prescribed without first contacting your veterinarian.
- Oral antibiotics should not be given at the same time as probiotics. Give the probiotic 1 to 2 hours before or several hours after any antibiotic

How is this medication useful?

Probiotics are used in dogs, cats, and horses to help support digestive health or to help manage gastrointestinal conditions such as loose stools or diarrhea.

These products are considered nutritional supplements and are not evaluated by the FDA for safety or efficacy. For your animal's safety, only use products recommended by your veterinarian. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this type of supplement is an appropriate choice for your animal.

What should I tell my veterinarian to see if this medication can be safely given?

Many things might affect how well this supplement will work in your animal. Be sure to discuss the following with your veterinarian so together you can make the best treatment decisions.

- 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 did not work.
- If your animal is pregnant or nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this supplement.
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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 supplement should start having effects within a few days. It may take longer to see an effect if your animal's signs have been present for a longer period of time. Your animal's signs should improve as the supplement begins working.

The effects of this supplement can last for varying amounts of time, depending on the product, the reason for treatment, and your animal's normal intestinal bacteria.

When should this medication not be used or be used very carefully?

No medication or supplement is 100% safe in all patients, but your veterinarian will discuss with you any specific concerns about using this supplement in your animal.

This supplement **SHOULD NOT** be used in animals that are:

- Allergic to any ingredients or flavorings in the product.

This supplement should be used **CAREFULLY** in animals that:

- Have a decreased immune system.
- Are critically ill.

What are the side effects of this medication? This supplement is typically well tolerated.

Side effects that are usually not serious include:

- Further stomach upset, including nausea, vomiting, excessive gas, or diarrhea

Contact your veterinarian if any of these signs are severe, continue to occur, or worsen over time.

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: **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** (888-426-4435) and **Pet Poison Helpline** (855-764-7661); a consultation fee is charged for these services.

How should this medication be given?

- Give this supplement as instructed by your veterinarian. Your veterinarian's instructions may be different than the instructions on the product.
- Be sure you understand how long your veterinarian wants you to use this supplement

What should I do if I miss giving a dose of this medication?

If you miss a dose, give it as soon as you remember, then continue with the regular dosing schedule. If it is close to the time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and then continue the regular dosing schedule. Do not double-up or give extra doses.

How should I store this medication?

In general, probiotics should be stored:

- In a cool, dry place
- Out of reach of other animals and children

Storage requirements may differ between products and formulations. Always check the specific storage instructions on the product label.

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

There are no specific precautions required when handling this supplement unless you are allergic to it. Wash your hands after handling any medication or supplement.

How should I dispose of this medication if I don't use it all?

- Do not flush this supplement down the toilet or wash it down the sink. Throw any leftover product in the regular trash.

What other information is important for this medication?

- Probiotics are not regulated by the FDA and not all products are the same.
- Only use products recommended by your veterinarian to make sure you are using a safe, high-quality product that is most helpful for your animal.
- If your animal is also taking oral antibiotics, do not give them at the same time as probiotics. Give the probiotic 1 to 2 hours before or several hours after any antibiotic.
- Use of this supplement 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.