



Cetirizine

Brand Names: Zyrtec; over-the-counter generic or store-brand products

Medication Use:

Cetirizine is an antihistamine. It is used to treat allergen mediated itching and inflammation (i.e. atopic dermatitis), rhinitis and other allergic conditions.

Precautions:

Cetirizine can cause sedation, urinary retention, and constipation. However, cetirizine is not as likely as other antihistamines (like Benedryl (diphenhydramine) to cause sedation. Cetirizine should be used with caution in older pets or those with pre-existing conditions affecting the kidneys. When given to cats, cetirizine can also cause excitement after dosing.

It is important to let your veterinarian know about all of the medications, herbal supplements and special diets that your pet may be given.

How is the Medicine Given?

Cetirizine is usually given orally with or without food once a day in dogs, cats. If your pet is a show animal or working animal, it is recommended to give a test dose at home to see how your animal reacts due to the possible sedation or paradoxical excitation.

The successful outcome of your animal's treatment with this medication depends upon your commitment and ability to administer it exactly as the veterinarian has prescribed. Please do not skip doses or stop giving the medication. If you have difficulty giving doses consult your veterinarian or pharmacist who can offer administration techniques or change the dosage form to a type of medication that may be more acceptable to you and your animal.

If you miss a dose of this medication you should give it as soon as you remember it, but if it is within a few hours of the regularly scheduled dose, wait and give it at the regular time.

DO NOT double a dose as this can be toxic to your pet.

Side Effects:

The most likely side effects are sedation and drowsiness. This side effect is generally mild and goes away with time.

Vomiting and increased salivation has been reported in some dogs. If your pet vomits soon after administering the dose of cetirizine, or if they vomit multiple times, contact your veterinarian before giving additional doses.

Storage:

Cetirizine should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets. Store at room temperature between 15 and 30 degrees C (59 and 86 degrees F).