

# Allopurinol

(al-oh-pyoor-i-nol)

**Category:** Xanthine Oxidase Inhibitor/Purine Analog

**Other Names for this Medication:** Zyloprim®

**Common Dosage Forms:** **Veterinary:** None. **Human:** 100 mg & 300 mg tablets.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication. It is to help answer commonly asked questions and help you give the medication safely and effectively to your animal. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

## Key Information

- ▶ May be given with or without food. If your pet vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ When used long-term in dogs, low-purine diets are usually recommended.
- ▶ Usually does not cause many side effects, but contact veterinarian immediately if rash; unusual tiredness/lack of energy; or yellowing of the whites of the eyes, skin, or gums is seen.
- ▶ If using in drinking water for birds or reptiles, make a fresh solution every day.

## How is this medication useful?

In dogs, allopurinol is used to treat and prevent the formation of certain types of kidney and urinary bladder stones. It is also used alone or in combination with other drugs to treat certain parasitic infections including leishmaniasis and American trypanosomiasis. In birds and reptiles, allopurinol is prescribed to treat gout (a type of joint inflammation).

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in humans but it is not officially approved for use in animals. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe 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 interact with allopurinol, 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.
- ▶ Because purine in the diet can cause side effects, ask your veterinarian what foods (including treats) are safe to use while your animal is taking this medication.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your pet may now have 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 (or allergic reactions) your animal developed in the past.

## 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 about using this drug in your animal.

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

- ▶ That are allergic to it.

This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in:

- ▶ Animals that have liver or kidney problems.
- ▶ Red-tailed hawks since they appear to be sensitive to the drug.

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

## What are the side effects of this medication?

While allopurinol can cause blood and liver problems in people, these effects are not seen very often in animals.

### Common but not serious side effects include:

- ▶ While normal doses of allopurinol are used to prevent a certain kind of kidney stone (urate), high doses of allopurinol can cause formation of a different kind of kidney stone (xanthine). In dogs, a low-purine diet helps reduce the chance of this occurring.
- ▶ Some animals may vomit after receiving the drug. If giving the medication with food does not help, contact your veterinarian.

### Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:

- ▶ Rash.
- ▶ Yellowing of the whites of the eyes, skin, or gums (jaundice).
- ▶ Unusual tiredness or lack of energy.

Contact your veterinarian immediately if you see any of these signs.

## If my pet gets too much of this medication (an overdose), what should I do?

Overdoses of allopurinol can be serious, but vomiting is the most likely effect. 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?

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.

- ▶ For dogs or cats, allopurinol can be given with or without food, but if your pet vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.

- ▶ For birds or reptiles, if your veterinarian has instructed you to mix the medicine in drinking water, be sure to make a new solution every day.
- ▶ Compounded liquid forms of this medication must be measured carefully. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can help by providing special measuring spoons or syringes.
- ▶ If you have difficulty getting your animal to take the medicine, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help dosing and reducing the stress of medication time.
- ▶ This medication can be given for various lengths of time. Be sure you understand how long your veterinarian wants you to continue giving this medication. Prescription refills may be necessary before the therapy will be complete. 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, but if it is close to the time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and give it at the next scheduled time. After that, return to the regular dosing schedule. 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. Keep away from children and other animals.
- ▶ If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the noted storage recommendations and expiration date for the product.

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

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?**

- ▶ 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 or concerns about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.**