Carbimazole
(kar-bi-ma-zole)

**Description:** Antithyroid Agent

**Other Names for this Medication:** Neo-Carbimazole®, Carbazole®, Neo-Mercazole®

**Common Dosage Forms:** Veterinary: None. Human: None in US; may be available elsewhere as 5 mg & 20 mg tablets. Compounded forms may be available, including a topical transdermal gel.

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**

- Used to lower thyroid hormone levels in animals.
- Special handling considerations for owners, especially pregnant or nursing women.
- May be given with or without food. If your animal 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.
- Most side effects (eg, vomiting, lack of appetite, depression/lethargy) occur in the first 3 months of therapy.

**How is this medication useful?**

Carbimazole is a medication used to lower the thyroid hormone levels in animals, primarily, cats. This medicine does not cure an overactive thyroid condition, but will control the disease when given to the animal for the rest of its life. Veterinarians may also prescribe carbimazole for dogs to protect their kidneys while receiving cisplatin chemotherapy. This drug is not approved by the FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) for use in the US. However, it is routinely used in other countries in place of methimazole (another antithyroid drug). 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 carbimazole, so be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you are giving your animal, as well as the amount and schedule of 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 takes several doses before you will see any benefits. The medication’s full effects may not be evident until it has been given consistently for several weeks, although you may see some side effects (eg, upset stomach or sleepiness) immediately. Your animal's clinical signs will improve gradually over the time the medication takes to become fully effective.

The effects of this medication are short-lived, meaning they will stop working within 24 hours, 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 about using this drug in your animal.

This drug SHOULD NOT be used in patients:
- That have had an allergic or severe reaction to carbimazole, methimazole, or polyethylene glycol.

This drug should be used WITH CAUTION in patients:
- That already have anemia (low red blood cells), liver disease, kidney failure, or problems with their immune systems.
- That are pregnant or nursing.

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?

Carbimazole is usually tolerated well, but side effects can occur. Most side effects happen in the first 3 months of therapy.

**Side effects that usually are not serious include:**
- Vomiting, decrease or loss of appetite, depression, or 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.

**Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:**
- A fever (>103°F), bruising, or your animal seems unusually tired.
- Severe weakness of your animal’s muscles.
- Itching and scratching (particularly of the face), to the point that the animal causes bleeding, or evidence of sores.

If you see any of these signs, contact your veterinarian immediately.

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

Overdoses of carbimazole can cause vomiting, loss of appetite, sleepiness or sluggishness, weakness, fever, or bruising/sores.

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 prescribed. Do not cut or break tablets unless instructed to by your veterinarian or pharmacist. It’s a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.

- Carbimazole may be given either with food or on an empty stomach. If your animal 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.
- Carbimazole is also available as a topical gel (transdermal, PLO) that you rub into your cat’s ear twice daily. If you are using the gel form, you should always wear disposable gloves; dispose of gloves in trash and wash your hands well after each use.
- 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, often for the remainder of your animal’s life. 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.

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What should I do if I miss giving a dose of this medication?
If you miss a dose, wait and give the dose at the next scheduled time. After that, return to the regular dosing schedule. Do not double-up doses or give an extra dose.

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, out of direct sunlight.
- 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?
Pregnant women or women who may become pregnant, nursing mothers, or people with low thyroid hormones should avoid handling carbimazole. If this is not possible, wear disposable gloves while handling this medication and cat litter or bodily fluids (feces, blood, saliva) of treated animals. Do not reuse gloves. Once used, the gloves should be thrown away in the trash.

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?
- Animals taking carbimazole will require close monitoring with regular blood testing. The frequency of the blood testing will decrease after the first year, unless there are problems or side effects. Do not miss these important follow-up visits.
- It is recommended that kittens be placed on a milk replacer after receiving colostrum from mothers on carbimazole.

If you have any other questions about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.