Fexofenadine
(fex-oh-fen-ah-deen)
Description: Antihistamine
Other Names for this Medication: Allegra®, Telfast®
Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. Human: 30 mg, 60 mg, & 180 mg tablets; 30 mg orally disintegrating tablets; 180 mg sustained-release tablets; 30 mg/5 mL (6 mg/mL) oral suspension.

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
- Use only products that contain fexofenadine as a single active ingredient. Any other ingredients (eg, pain relievers, decongestants) found in human-label combination products can be toxic to animals.
- Antihistamines should be used on a regular, ongoing basis in animals that respond to them. They work better if used before exposure to an allergen (eg, pollens).
- May be given with or without food. If your animal vomits or acts sick after receiving the medication on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- Causes less sleepiness than other antihistamines, but this can still occur.
- If using a sustained-release product, do not split or crush the tablets.

How is this medication useful?
Allergies cause histamine release, which causes itchy skin. Fexofenadine blocks histamine's effects and reduces itchiness associated with allergies. It can also be used as an additional treatment for itching related to certain types of cancers (eg, mast cell tumors). As with other antihistamines, the response to this drug can vary between animals and be unpredictable, so your veterinarian may try several different antihistamines to see which one works best for your animal. Fexofenadine may be used with another antihistamine to improve its effects.

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 fexofenadine, 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 lack of appetite, vomiting, 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 help your animal feel better within 1 to 2 hours. Your animal’s clinical signs should improve after that time. 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 with:

- A history of allergic reactions it.
- Appointments for allergy testing. Antihistamines interfere with the results of allergy testing. Talk with your veterinarian about when to stop giving this medication.

This drug should be used WITH CAUTION in patients with:

- Glaucoma, which the drug may make worse.
- Older patients.
- Working dogs (eg, guide dogs, search dogs, hunting dogs, sled dogs, rescue dogs) may become sleepy and unable to perform their duties while on this drug.
- Nursing mothers.
- Problems urinating, prostate enlargement, thyroid problems, or heart disease.
- Obstructions in the gastrointestinal tract.
- Severe kidney or liver problems.

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?

Side effects are not commonly reported in dogs or cats, but sleepiness can occur. Contact your veterinarian if you believe the drug is causing a side effect or problem.

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

Fexofenadine overdoses are usually not serious; however, large overdoses may be. 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 medication 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 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.
- Liquid forms of this medication must be measured carefully. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can help by providing special measuring spoons or syringes. Shake the oral suspension well before use.
- 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.

- 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 are giving this drug twice a day, give the next dose when it is usually time to do so. If you are giving this drug once daily, give it when you remember, then give it at the regular time the next day. 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.
- 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?
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.