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## **ATOPICA for Dogs ( Cyclosporine A)**

### ***Why has my veterinarian prescribed this medicine?***

Atopica is an immunosuppressive agent. It is used to modify or control the immune system. Atopica is approved for use in dogs to help control Atopy, also known as inhalant allergy. Some pets may be put on Atopica for other diseases.



### ***How do I give this medication?***

- Give this medication to your pet as directed by your veterinarian. **READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY.**
- Try to give this medication at about the same time each day.
- **DO NOT** give the pet more medicine than directed and do not give more often than directed.
- For the first two weeks of medication give this drug with or immediately after a meal, unless directed otherwise by your veterinarian.
- After the first two weeks of medication, give this drug on an empty stomach (at least one hour before or two hours after a meal)
- If your pet vomits, has diarrhea or their appetite decreases while taking Atopica, call your veterinarian.
- Try not to miss giving any doses.
- Most dogs will show improvement in the first 4 weeks of taking Atopica. If no improvement is seen in the first 8 weeks, stop giving the drug.
- Many dogs will be able to eventually take Atopica less often. A gradual change in how often your pet needs Atopica will be discussed with you at the appropriate phase of your pet's treatment by your veterinarian.

### ***What if I miss giving a dose?***

Give the dose as soon as possible. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose, and continue with the regular schedule. Do not give the pet two doses at once. Atopica is only given once daily.

### ***How do I store this medicine?***

- Keep this medicine out of reach of children.
- Store this medicine in the original container at controlled room temperature between 59° and 77° F (15° -25° C).

### ***What are the potential side effects?***

- When giving Atopica your pet may experience the following side effects: vomiting, diarrhea and loss of appetite. There may be medication that can help control these side effects in your pet. Digestive system upset is most common in the first 2 weeks of treatment.
- Your pet may also experience liver and kidney problems. If you notice anything unusual, contact your veterinarian.

- Gingival hyperplasia (gum overgrowth) and certain skin growths (viral papillomas) may develop while your pet is taking this medicine orally. If the medication is stopped these growths will go away.
- Be sure to tell your veterinarian if your pet has ever had malignant cancer before starting them on Atopica
- Other side effects may occur. If you notice anything unusual, contact your veterinarian.

### ***Are there any possible drug interactions?***

- Make sure to tell your veterinarian what other medication or supplements you are giving to your pet.
- Your veterinarian may prescribe two different medications, even if a drug interaction may occur. In this case, your veterinarian may vary the dose and/or monitor your pet more closely. Ketoconazole is sometimes prescribed with Atopica.
- The following drugs can potentially interact with cyclosporin: gentamicin, amphotericin B, ketoconazole, erythromycin, cimetidine, phenobarbital, and phenytoin. If your pet is on any of these medications, be sure to let your veterinarian know.
- Contact your veterinarian if your pet experiences any unusual reactions when different medications are given together.

### ***Are there any special precautions if my pet takes Atopica?***

- Your veterinarian will carry out a complete clinical examination of your pet before prescribing Atopica. Screening blood and urine tests to detect any underlying problems will be performed as well. If your pet currently has itchy skin, ears or feet, has redness or other signs of inflammation, tests and treatments for other common causes such as fleas and mites, bacterial and fungal infections and possibly food allergy may be needed before Atopica can be prescribed.
- If your pet has any history of malignant cancer, you and your veterinarian will need to discuss the risks and benefits of Atopica. Cyclosporine inhibits T-lymphocytes and though it does not cause tumors, it may lead to earlier physical signs of cancer. In other words, if your pet's body is developing cancer, signs of the cancer will be seen sooner rather than later if the pet is taking Atopica.
- Your pet must have regular, effective flea treatment and prevention before and during treatment of atopy. Your veterinarian will discuss what preventions are best for your pet.
- If your pet has kidney disease, liver disease or diabetes regular blood and urine tests may be needed more often. Your veterinarian will need to determine how often your pet needs tested.
- The safety and effectiveness of Atopica has not been established in dogs less than 6 months of age or less than 4 pounds body weight. Atopica is not for use in breeding, pregnant or nursing dogs.