

## CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: **December 2014**

# Ondansetron

- **Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again.**
- **Please ask your vet or veterinary nurse if you have any further questions.**
- **This medicine has been prescribed for *your* pet ONLY. Do not take it yourself or give it to another person or any other animal; it may harm them even if their symptoms appear to be the same.**

The medicine you have been given for your dog or cat is called ondansetron. It may have a trade name such as Zofran® or Ondemet®, but often will just be called ondansetron.

### What is ondansetron?

Ondansetron belongs to a group of medicines that are called anti-emetics. These drugs are used to stop vomiting caused by a variety of conditions. Ondansetron is particularly useful for controlling vomiting caused by chemotherapy agents (drugs used to treat cancer).

### Why has my pet been prescribed ondansetron?

Ondansetron is most often used in dogs and cats undergoing chemotherapy, to stop the vomiting caused by anti-cancer drugs. It is given to veterinary patients when other drugs have not controlled severe vomiting or when patients are unable to tolerate the more commonly prescribed anti-emetics.

### How should I store ondansetron?

This medicine does not require special storage conditions. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

### How do I give ondansetron tablets or syrup to my pet?

Try to disguise the ondansetron in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, it can be placed carefully on the back of the pet's tongue and their mouth held closed until the entire dose has been swallowed.

### How do I give ondansetron suppositories to my pet?

Ondansetron suppositories are used when pets are unable to swallow or are vomiting so badly that tablets and syrups make them sick straightaway. **Suppositories should NOT be given by mouth.** Your vet will show you how to place the suppository into your pet's anus; if the vet does not show you, then please ask them to do so. It is important to be gentle and to talk

reassuringly to your pet whilst placing the suppository.

### How long will my pet need to take ondansetron?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients.

### What should I do if I run out of ondansetron?

If you run out of ondansetron contact your veterinary surgeon the next working day and ask them what they want you to do. It may be that your vet has prescribed a course that has now come to an end as your pet does not need the treatment any more. It may be that your vet needs to examine your pet before more treatment is prescribed. Remember to take any empty containers with you when you go to see your vet.

### What should I do if I miss a dose?

If a dose is missed, give the medication as soon as possible. However, it is best to skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your pet's next scheduled dose. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed dose and do not exceed the total stated dose in any one 24-hour period.

### What should I do if my pet is accidentally given too many doses?

One extra dose is unlikely to hurt your pet. However, contact your vet as soon as possible if a larger overdose is given. There is limited information available regarding ondansetron overdose in veterinary patients.

### Can my pet take ondansetron if I am already giving them other drugs?

Tell your vet if you are giving your pet any other medications, even if you think they already know. This includes herbal or off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop or pharmacy. Check with your vet if your pet is already

taking tramadol, as ondansetron may reduce the effectiveness of tramadol and so the dose of tramadol may need to be increased. If you have any concerns about using ondansetron with other medications, please ask your vet for further advice.

### What are the possible side effects of ondansetron for my pet?

In people ondansetron can cause headaches, constipation and, very rarely, an allergic reaction. If your pet shows *any* unusual symptoms whilst taking this medication, please contact your vet.

### What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking ondansetron?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, you should not give any further doses and should contact your vet as soon as possible for advice.

### What should I do if a person accidentally takes this drug?

If a person accidentally takes your pet's medicine, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining medicine plus its container (even if it is empty) with you.

### Whom do I contact if I want to know more?

If you have any questions about this drug, or concerns about your pet's health, contact your own vet. They will know your pet's medical history and will know about ondansetron.

### The Prescribing Cascade

This medicine is authorized for use in human patients and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. The medicine is not authorized by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), for use in dogs/cats/pets. Your vet can explain the 'prescribing cascade' in further detail to you and also explain why they are prescribing this drug for your pet. You will be asked to sign a consent form stating that you understand the reasons that the drug is being prescribed and its possible complications, before the treatment is issued.

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