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HEARTGARD®



Merial

(ivermectin)

### **Chewables**

**Caution:** Federal (U.S.A.) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

**INDICATION:** For use in dogs to prevent canine heartworm disease by eliminating the tissue stage of heartworm larvae (*Dirofilaria immitis*) for a month (30 days) after infection.

**DOSAGE:** HEARTGARD® Chewables should be administered orally at monthly intervals at the recommended minimum dose level of 6.0 mcg of ivermectin per kilogram (2.72 mcg/lb) of body weight. (See ADMINISTRATION). The recommended dosage schedule for prevention of canine heartworm disease is as follows:

<b>Dog Weight</b>	<b>Chewables Per Month</b>	<b>Ivermectin Content</b>	<b>Color Coding on Foil Backing and Carton</b>
Up to 25 lb	1	68 mcg	Blue
26 to 50 lb	1	136 mcg	Green
51 to 100 lb	1	272 mcg	Brown

Give dogs over 100 lb the appropriate combination of these chewables.

HEARTGARD Chewables are recommended for use in dogs 6 weeks of age and older.

**ADMINISTRATION:** Remove only one chewable at a time from the foil-backed blister card. Return the card with the remaining chewables to the box to protect the product from light. Because most dogs find HEARTGARD Chewables palatable, the product can be offered to the dog by hand. Alternatively, it may be added to a small amount of dog food. The chewable should be administered in a manner that encourages the dog to chew, rather than to swallow without chewing. Chewables may be broken into pieces and fed to dogs that normally swallow treats whole.

Care should be taken to see that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed for a few minutes after administration to ensure that part of the dose is not lost or rejected. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost, redosing is recommended.

HEARTGARD Chewables should be given at monthly intervals during the period of the year when mosquitoes (vectors), potentially carrying infective heartworm larvae, are active. The initial dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's first exposure to mosquitoes. The final dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's last exposure to mosquitoes.

When replacing another heartworm preventive in a heartworm disease preventive program, the first dose of HEARTGARD must be given within a month (30 days) after the last dose of the former medication.

If the interval between doses exceeds a month (30 days), the efficacy of ivermectin can be reduced. For optimal performance, the chewable must be given once a month on or about the same day of the month. If treatment is delayed, whether by a few days or many, immediate treatment with HEARTGARD and resumption of the recommended dosing regimen minimizes the opportunity for the development of adult heartworms.

**EFFICACY:** HEARTGARD<sup>®</sup> (ivermectin) Chewables, given orally using the recommended dose and regimen, are effective against the tissue larval stage of *Dirofilaria immitis* for a month (30 days) after infection and, as a result, prevent the development of the adult stage.

**ACCEPTABILITY:** In acceptability and field trials, HEARTGARD Chewables were shown to be an acceptable oral dosage form that was consumed at the first offering by the majority of dogs.

**PRECAUTIONS:** All dogs should be tested for existing heartworm infection before starting treatment with HEARTGARD which is not effective against adult *D. immitis*. Infected dogs must be treated to remove adult heartworms and microfilariae prior to initiating a program with HEARTGARD.

While some microfilariae may be killed by the ivermectin in HEARTGARD at the recommended dose level, HEARTGARD is not effective for microfilariae clearance. A mild hypersensitivity-type reaction, presumably due to dead or dying microfilariae and particularly involving a transient diarrhea, has been observed in clinical trials with ivermectin after treatment of some dogs that have circulating microfilariae.

**Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children.** In case of ingestion by humans, clients should be advised to contact a physician immediately. Physicians may contact a Poison Control Center for advice concerning cases of ingestion by humans.

Store between 68°F-77°F (20°-25°C). Excursions between 59°F-86°F (15°-30°C) are permitted. Protect product from light.

**ADVERSE REACTIONS:** The following adverse reactions have been reported following the use of HEARTGARD: Depression/lethargy, vomiting, anorexia, diarrhea, mydriasis, ataxia, staggering, convulsions and hypersalivation.

**SAFETY:** HEARTGARD has shown a wide margin of safety at the recommended dose level in dogs (See PRECAUTIONS for exceptions) including pregnant or breeding bitches, stud dogs and puppies aged 6 or more weeks. In clinical trials, many commonly used flea collars, dips, shampoos, anthelmintics, antibiotics, vaccines, and steroid preparations have been administered with HEARTGARD Chewables in a heartworm disease preventive program.

Studies with ivermectin indicate that certain dogs of the Collie breed are more sensitive to the effects of ivermectin administered at elevated dose levels (more than 16 times the target use level) than dogs of other

breeds. At elevated doses, sensitive dogs showed adverse reactions which included mydriasis, depression, ataxia, tremors, drooling, paresis, recumbency, excitability, stupor, coma and death. HEARTGARD demonstrated no signs of toxicity at 10 times the recommended dose (60 mcg/kg) in sensitive Collies. Results of these trials support the safety of HEARTGARD products in dogs, including Collies, when used as recommended.

**HOW SUPPLIED:** HEARTGARD Chewables are available in three dosage strengths (See DOSAGE section) for dogs of different weights. Each strength comes in convenient cartons of 6 chewables, packed 10 cartons per tray.

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For customer assistance, please contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251.

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