

Uses

Theophylline is a bronchodilator used in the treatment of heart failure, pulmonary edema, bronchial asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Availability

Theophylline is available as tablet, long-acting tablet or capsule and liquid.

How this medicine should be used

Theophylline is not FDA approved for use in veterinary medicine; however, it is a commonly accepted practice to use this medication in dogs and cats. The usual dose of theophylline in dogs is 2.25-5mg/pound every 8 hours. The usual dose in cats is 2mg/pound every 8-12 hours. When the long acting dosage forms are given to dogs, the dose is 10mg/pound every 12 hours. Give theophylline on an empty stomach, 1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal. If using the long acting form, do not chew, crush or allow to dissolve on food.

Side effects

Side effects when using theophylline include vomiting, central nervous system excitement, fever, rash and palpitations. Side effects usually subside with dosage adjustments and/or continued therapy.

Special precautions

Theophylline should not be used in patients allergic to this class of medication. Do not use in pregnant or lactating animals. Theophylline should be used with caution in patients with severe heart disease, liver or kidney disease, hyperthyroidism, hypertension or stomach ulcers. Certain medications such as phenobarbital and phenytoin may decrease the effect of theophylline. Certain medications such as cimetidine, erythromycin, levothyroxine and quinolone antibiotics such as Baytril may cause an increase in the effect of theophylline. Always tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what other medications your pet is taking.

In the event of an overdose

Contact your veterinarian or veterinary emergency room. Symptoms of overdose may include increased heart rate, seizures, increased temperature and death.

Storage

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed. Store this medication at room temperature, away from excess heat, light and moisture. Do not store in the bathroom. Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Keep this medication out of the reach of children and pets.