



# Gabapentin

**OTHER NAMES:** Neurontin®

**USE:** Gabapentin is a pain reliever (chronic nerve pain) and anticonvulsant medication. A common side effect is sedation and drowsiness, leading to its use as a sedative before veterinary visit stress.

## ADMINISTRATION & DOSING

The FDA has approved this drug for use in humans, but it is not officially approved for use in animals. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe and use human products containing this drug in animals in certain situations. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this drug is the most appropriate choice.

Please check your pet's medication label for specific dosing instructions.

- This medication can be given with food or on an empty stomach. It is most effective when given right before feeding.
- This medication typically starts to work within 1-2 hours. Its effects are short-lived, meaning they stop working within 24 hours. If your animal has decreased kidney and/or liver function, the effects may be prolonged.
- The duration of therapy is variable.
- This drug should be administered cautiously in animals with kidney disease or who are allergic/sensitive to its effects.
- **\*\*The oral liquid manufactured for humans may contain the sweetener xylitol; xylitol is toxic to dogs and should not be used in this species. Please double-check the ingredients in the prescribed formulation with your pharmacist or veterinarian.**
- Do not administer within two hours of an antacid medication. Antacids can decrease the absorption of gabapentin.
- If this medication is being used for the treatment of seizures, it needs to be decreased slowly to prevent increased/refractory seizure activity. Please discuss this with your veterinarian.

## SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects are common with this medication.

**Side effects that are typically not serious:**

- Sedation/tiredness
- Loss of coordination
- Drooling/hypersalivation

Contact your veterinarian if any signs are severe, worsen, or remain problematic.

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF ADMINISTERING TOO MUCH MEDICATION (OVERDOSE)

If you witness or suspect an overdose, contact your veterinarian, a local emergency hospital, or an animal poison control center for further advice. Animal poison control centers open 24 hours a day, including the **Pet Poison HELPLINE (855-764-7661)** and **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435)**; a consultation fee is charged for these services.

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A MISSED DOSE

If you miss a dose, wait and give the next dose when it is usually time. Do not double up doses or give an extra dose.

## MEDICATION STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store this medication in the original prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder container at room temperature and protected from light.
- If your veterinarian or pharmacist has prepared (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the product's storage recommendations and expiration date.
- Keep away from children and other animals.
- No specific precautions are required when handling this medication unless you are allergic to it.
- Wash your hands after handling any medication.
- 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.