



# Mirtazapine

**OTHER NAMES:** Mirataz®, Remeron®

**USE:** Mirtazapine is a transdermal ointment (applied topically on the skin) or oral medication used to help stimulate appetite. It may also help decrease nausea and motion sickness.

## ADMINISTRATION & DOSING

A veterinary-approved transdermal ointment is approved for use in cats. Wear gloves when handling this medication and avoid contact with treated cats for two hours after application.

There are approved tablets for humans that can also be used in animals. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe products containing this drug in different species or for other conditions 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.

- The oral tablets can be given with food or on an empty stomach.
- Cats may be more prone to medication side effects.
- This medication should start working within 1 to 2 days. Its effects are short-lived, meaning they will stop working within 24 hours, although the benefits may be prolonged if your animal has decreased kidney and/or liver function.
- The duration of therapy is variable.
- This medication is contraindicated/should not be used in patients who are also taking other MAOI medications and have a gastrointestinal obstruction/blockage. Caution is recommended when used in patients with severe liver, severe kidney, severe heart disease, diabetes, or glaucoma.

## SIDE EFFECTS

This medication is generally well-tolerated in dogs and can cause rare side effects in cats (often within 90 minutes of the dose).

### Side effects that are typically not serious:

- Vocalization
- Mild tremors or shaking
- Sleepiness or sedation
- Increased affection
- With the transdermal formulation: application site redness, residue, crusting, or scabbing

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

### Rare, but serious side effects:

- Severe tremors or shaking
- Severe hyperreactivity, hyperexcitability, or agitation
- Low blood pressure (fainting, collapse)
- Fast heartbeat

**If you see any of these signs, immediately contact your veterinarian or an emergency veterinary hospital.**

## 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

Wait to give the next dose until it is usually time to do so, and then resume normal dosing. Do not double up or give extra doses.

Consider contacting your veterinarian for additional information.

## 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.
- Discard transdermal ointment within 30 days of its first use.
- Wear disposable gloves while handling the transdermal ointment medication. Do not reuse gloves; once used, they should be thrown away.
- To reduce the risk of exposure to the medicine, people or other household animals should not come in contact with the treated animal for 2 hours. If accidental exposure occurs, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water. If accidental eye exposure occurs, flush the eyes with water. Contact your physician if you have any concerns.
- No specific precautions are required when handling the oral tablet formulations unless you are allergic to them.
- 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.