





Drug Information: Phenobarbital

Name - Active Ingredient

 Phenobarbital


Name - Common Trade Names


 Epiphen, Phenobarb, Solfoton, Luminal, generics

Species





Major Indication

 Anti-epileptic, anti-seizure drug


 Sedative


Common Contraindications and Warnings


 Use with caution in patients that are dehydrated, anaemic, pregnant or lactating, or have heart or lung disease.


 Do not use when liver function is impaired.

Potential Side Effects


 Sedation and wobbliness are frequently seen when treatment is started. These typically resolve within a week unless high doses are given.


 Increased thirst, urination, and appetite is often seen. This frequently resolves but can persist in some individuals, especially at higher doses.

 Raised liver enzymes are common but do not generally indicate liver dysfunction.


 Rare side effects include excitability, liver damage/failure, blood cell disorders, and skin disease.

Administration Instructions/Handling


 Give with or without food. If vomiting is seen when given without food, try giving with food instead.


 Do not skip doses or suddenly stop treatment, as this may result in seizures. If a dose is missed, give at the earliest opportunity and then again when next due.

Storage


 Store at room temperature in a light-proof container.

Speed of Action + Monitoring

 It takes 12 to 14 days in dogs and 9 to 10 days in cats for blood levels to stabilize and the full ability of the drug dose to be evaluated.

 Regular blood testing should be carried out to:

- Monitor the level of phenobarbital in the blood as this level tends to decrease with time, meaning a higher dose may be required.
- Ensure liver damage is not occurring.

 Monitor seizure frequency and severity - keep a seizure diary.

REMEMBER! READ THE LABEL!

Drug Details

Drug name
Phenobarbital

Trade or common names
Epiphen, Phenobarb, Solfoton,
Luminal, generics

Drug type
Barbiturate

Used for
Seizure control

Species
Dog + cat

Formulation
Injectable, tablets, oral solution



Notes:

General disclaimer

The authors assume no responsibility for any harm that results from the information provided. Medications are given for a number of different reasons, and they may not be appropriate for specific individuals. Medication and supplements should only be given to your pet under the direct instruction of your veterinarian.