Amlodipine

Norvasc® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?
- This medication works on the heart and blood vessels to help lower blood pressure. High blood pressure in animals can cause kidney damage and blindness. High blood pressure usually occurs more in cats than in dogs.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?
- Amlodipine has strong effects on the heart and should be used carefully in animals with heart failure.
- Amlodipine is also removed from the body by the liver, and should be used carefully in animals with liver disease.
- This drug has also caused birth defects and should not be used in pregnant or nursing animals.
- It should be used carefully in combination with other drugs that lower blood pressure to prevent the blood pressure from becoming too low.
- If your animal has any of the above conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks of using the medication versus the benefits that it might have.

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?
- Amlodipine does not have many side effects in animals. Headache is a common side effect when used in humans.
- This drug can also cause the blood to take longer to clot when used in dogs. For this reason, it should be used very carefully in combination with other drugs that thin the blood such as warfarin or aspirin.

How Should It Be Given?
- The successful outcome of your animal's treatment with this medication depends upon your commitment and ability to administer it exactly as the veterinarian has prescribed. Please do not skip doses or stop giving the medication. If you have difficulty giving doses consult your veterinarian or pharmacist who can offer administration techniques or change the dosage form to a type of medication that may be more acceptable to you and your animal.
- Some other drugs can interact with this medication so tell your veterinarian about any drugs or foods that you currently give your animal. Do not give new foods or medications without first asking your veterinarian.
- Dogs and Cats: Amlodipine is usually given by mouth to cats and dogs once daily. It can be given with food. You will need to take your pet back to the veterinarian for blood pressure checks and eye exams to make sure that the medication is working.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?
- This medication is available as a diamond shaped tablet. Because of this shape, the tablet may be hard to split into halves or quarters. Because cats can be very sensitive to this drug, it is best to have your pharmacist make you special capsules that contain exactly the right dose.
- Try not to skip doses. If you miss a dose, give it as soon as you remember it, but never double a dose to make up for missed ones as this may increase the side effects.