Butorphanol Tartrate

Torbugesic®, Torbutrol®, and Stadol® are other names for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?
- Butorphanol is used in veterinary medicine as a pain reliever and also as a cough suppressant. It may also be used during chemotherapy to prevent chemotherapy-induced vomiting.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?
- Butorphanol should not be used in patients with liver disease as the drug cannot be efficiently eliminated and may accumulate to toxic levels.
- Animals with diseases of the lungs that produce lots of mucus should not receive butorphanol as this drug prevents removal of the mucus by coughing.
- Because this drug depresses the brain it should not be used in patients with injuries to the head or those in a coma.
- Butorphanol should be used with caution in animals that have kidney disease.
- Although butorphanol is commonly used to suppress cough, it should be used very carefully in animals that have heartworm disease.
- Although it has not been shown to cause birth defects, the manufacturer recommends that butorphanol not be used in pregnancy.
- 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?
- The most common side effect from butorphanol is drowsiness.
- Some animals may either become overly sedated or overly excited with butorphanol.
- Higher doses may cause horses to become excited, shake their heads and pace.
- Some dogs and cats experience vomiting, loss of appetite and diarrhea from butorphanol. Others may become constipated.
- This drug may also partially reverse the effects of other pain relievers and tranquilizers. Please tell your veterinarian if you are administering any other drugs to your animal.

How Should It Be Given?
- Butorphanol can be given either as an oral tablet or by injection. This drug comes in many different sized tablets and strengths for injection. Make sure that you are using the correct amount as prescribed by your veterinarian.
- 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.
- If you miss a dose of this medication you should give it as soon as you remember it, but if it is within a few hours of the regularly scheduled dose, wait and give it at the regular time. Do not double a dose as this can be toxic to your pet.
- 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: Dogs and cats receive this drug orally or as an injection up to three times daily. Your veterinarian may give this drug more frequently when your pet is in the veterinary hospital.
- Horses: Horses receive this drug as an injection to relieve colic pain or for sedation. The Association of Racing Commissioners International has declared butorphanol to be a Class 2 substance.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?
- Butorphanol should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- Butorphanol is a controlled substance and should not be given to anyone other than the animal for whom it was prescribed.
- If your pet is taking it chronically for cough, prescriptions can only be refilled up to 5 times within 6 months of the original prescription date.