

Fluoxetine

Prozac® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- Fluoxetine is used to treat behavior problems such as aggression and obsessive compulsive disorders in dogs, cats and birds.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?

- Fluoxetine should not be used in animals who are also receiving drugs known as MOA inhibitors (Mitaban® Dip, Preventic® Flea Collars, Anipryl®, and izoniazid are a few of these drugs). When fluoxetine is given with these drugs it can cause serious increases in blood pressure that can cause death. Aged cheese can also cause this effect, so make sure that your pets do not get into any aged cheese while on this drug. If your pet is receiving any of these medications, your veterinarian will ask you to stop giving them for at least 2-5 weeks before he prescribes fluoxetine.
- Fluoxetine can also alter the level of sugar in the blood and should be used very carefully in diabetic patients.
- Because fluoxetine is removed from the body by the liver, it should be used carefully in animals with liver disease.
- It is not known if fluoxetine can be used safely in pregnant animals. This drug gets into breast milk in high levels and should not be used in nursing mothers.
- 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?

- Fluoxetine can cause tiredness, stomach upset, anxiety, irritability and restlessness in some animals. The most common side effect in dogs is loss of appetite. If your dog stops eating, try tempting it with better tasting foods or hand feeding until this side effect wears off. If your dog does not get his appetite back, your veterinarian will probably discontinue the use of this drug in your pet.
- Fluoxetine may cause some dogs to become aggressive. If you notice this kind of behavior change in your pet, you should notify your veterinarian immediately.

- Fluoxetine has caused liver damage in some people, so your veterinarian will probably want to monitor your pet's liver function while on this drug. If you notice that your pet seems more tired, has lost its appetite, or its skin and gums have a yellowish tint to them, you should call your veterinarian immediately.

How Should It Be Given?

- Fluoxetine can be given with or without food. Giving with food will prevent the stomach upset that is sometimes associated with this drug.
- It will take several weeks before fluoxetine reaches the blood levels required to have an effect on your pet's behavior. Your veterinarian will not be able to assess the effects of this drug for at least 1-4 weeks in your pet.
- Do not discontinue this drug abruptly. Your veterinarian will have you slowly decrease the amount you are giving over time to ensure that your pet's behavior problems do not return.
- 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 usually receive fluoxetine orally once daily for several weeks.
- **Birds:** Birds usually receive this medication orally once daily as a liquid.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- Fluoxetine should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.