Furosemide

Lasix®, Disal®, and Salix® are other names for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?
- Furosemide is used to remove excess fluid from the body in conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, and swelling.
- It may also be used in racehorses that get nosebleeds when they race.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?
- Furosemide should be used very carefully in animals with kidney disease as this drug may worsen the disease.
- Furosemide is related to sulfa drugs and should not be used in pets that are allergic to sulfas.
- Furosemide should be used very carefully in pets with diabetes and any other conditions where water and electrolytes are unbalanced.
- All of these conditions may be worsened if your pet is not eating or drinking enough. Please make sure that your pet has plenty of food and clean drinking water while on furosemide therapy.
- Furosemide interacts with many drugs possibly worsening your pet’s condition. You should tell your veterinarian about any drugs that you are currently giving your pet.
- If your animal has any of the above conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks of using the medication.

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?
- Furosemide may cause disruptions in electrolyte (salts) balance. Your veterinarian will monitor your animal’s blood levels of potassium, calcium, magnesium and sodium.
- Furosemide can harm the nerves responsible for hearing, especially in cats. If you notice that your cat seems to have lost its balance or has a slight tilt to its head, you should notify your veterinarian immediately.
- Some animals may experience weakness from the loss of fluids and electrolytes. Other animals may experience restlessness that may be related to the increased need for urination. If your pet shows signs of excessive thirst, tiredness, restlessness, lack of urination or racing heartbeat, you should contact your veterinarian immediately.
- Rarely, animals will experience anemia from furosemide treatment.

- Dehydration may increase the likelihood of all these side effects; so make sure your pet has plenty of clean water to drink.

How Should It Be Given?
- Furosemide is usually given orally to pets that are at home. Your veterinarian will probably inject it in the clinic. Furosemide may be given orally from once to three times daily depending on the severity of disease.
- Furosemide can be given with or without food.
- 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 usually receive furosemide orally every 8-24 hours.
Horses: Horses usually receive this drug orally two or three times daily for fluid removal. To prevent nose bleeds, furosemide is given by injection 1-4 hours prior to a race.

What Other Information is Important About This Medication?
- The use of furosemide in performance horses is regulated state by state. You should check with your state authorities prior to using furosemide in a performance or competition.
- Furosemide should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- Furosemide is a sulfa drug and owners who are allergic to sulfas should wear gloves and exercise extreme caution while handling this medication.