

Hydralazine

Apresoline® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- In animals with congestive heart failure, hydralazine may be used, oftentimes along with other medications. Hydralazine works by relaxing the arteries which allows the blood to flow more easily through the body.
- Hydralazine is also used to treat systemic hypertension (high blood pressure).

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

- Hydralazine should not be used in animals allergic to it.
- It should not be used in animals whose blood pressure is already too low.
- Hydralazine should be used with caution in animals with liver or kidney disease and those who have autoimmune diseases (*e.g.*, lupus)

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?

- Hydralazine may cause hypotension (too low blood pressure) and then a reflex increase in heart rate. Notify your veterinarian if your animal appears weak or lethargic (lacking energy).
- If it is not given with a diuretic, hydralazine can cause sodium and water retention. Your veterinarian will probably prescribe a diuretic to be given with hydralazine.
- Hydralazine may cause decreased appetite, vomiting or diarrhea in some animals.

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.
- 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.
- Preferably give this medication with food as more of the drug is absorbed and it may reduce the chances of gastrointestinal upset occurring.
- **Dogs and Cats:** Dogs usually receive this drug orally two to three times daily. Cats usually receive this drug orally twice daily.
- **Horses:** Hydralazine is not usually used in horses.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

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