

Imipramine

Tofranil® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- Imipramine is an antidepressant used to treat urinary leaking or separation anxiety in dogs and cats.
- It can be used to treat narcolepsy in horses.
- Imipramine is also used to treat ejaculatory problems in male breeding animals.
- It has sometimes been used in addition to other pain killers to treat cancer pain in animals.

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

- Imipramine can be very toxic in overdoses, causing heart failure and death. It should be given exactly as your veterinarian prescribes.
- Imipramine may worsen seizures in epileptic animals and should probably not be used in animals with a history of seizures.
- Imipramine should not be used in animals who are also receiving drugs known as MAO inhibitors (Mitaban® Dip, Preventic® Flea Collars, Anipryl®, and isoniazid are a few of these drugs). When imipramine 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 imipramine.
- Because imipramine is eliminated from the body by the liver, it should be used carefully in animals with liver disease.
- Imipramine has been shown to cause bone defects in the offspring of mothers receiving imipramine during pregnancy. It should not be used in pregnancy unless the benefits to the mother outweigh the risks to the fetus. Imipramine also gets into milk at high levels and should not be given to 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?

- Imipramine primarily causes sedation in animals, but this side effect usually goes away with time.

- Because of its effects on certain types of tissues, it may also cause side effects such as dry mouth, urinary retention and changes in heartbeat. You should contact your veterinarian immediately if you notice any of these symptoms in your pet.
- Some animals may get diarrhea from imipramine.
- Imipramine may cause bone marrow suppression and anemia 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.
- **Dogs and Cats:** Imipramine is usually given to dogs and cats orally once or twice daily. It can be given with or without food. Do not give your pet aged cheese or use tick collars while on this drug.
- **Horses:** Horses usually receive imipramine orally as a single dose prior to semen collection. It may also be given orally once daily for horses with narcolepsy.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

- For horses, imipramine is a Class 2 drug under the ARCI (Association of Racing Commissioners International) Uniform Classification Guidelines.
- Imipramine should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.