**Levothyroxine**

Levothyroxine is used to treat pets that don't make enough thyroid hormone. It can also be used to reduce weight in obese birds not responding to other therapies.

**How Is This Medication Useful?**

- Levothyroxine is used to treat pets that don't make enough thyroid hormone.
- It has also been used to reduce weight in obese birds not responding to other therapies.

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

- Levothyroxine should not be given to animals with heart conditions or those who are producing too much thyroid hormone. It should be used carefully in animals with diabetes, Addison's disease, heart disease or in old and debilitated animals. If your pet is diabetic, you may have to adjust the amount of insulin you give after levothyroxine is started.
- 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?**

- If administered at the correct dose, levothyroxine should not cause any side effects. If too much levothyroxine is given, your pet may experience racing heartbeat, excessive thirst and urination, excessive hunger, excitation and restlessness, panting and nervousness. If your pet shows these signs, you should contact your veterinarian immediately.
- Some species of red-feathered birds may start growing yellow feathers after treatment with levothyroxine.
- Levothyroxine can severely alter the results of laboratory tests. You should tell your veterinarian that your pet is taking levothyroxine before any laboratory testing is performed.

**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 as directed by your veterinarian. 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 levothyroxine orally once or twice daily. Cats do not usually receive levothyroxine but may receive it for short periods of time to correct overtreatment of hyperthyroidism.
- **Horses:** Horses receive levothyroxine powder in the feed or mixed with corn syrup orally once daily.
- **Birds:** Birds receive levothyroxine in their drinking water as a 0.1mg tablet dissolved in 1-4oz of drinking water daily. Feather color may change to yellow after treatment.

**What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?**

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