Liothyronine

Cytomel® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?

- Liothyronine is used to diagnose cats with overactive thyroids. It may also be used to treat animals with underactive thyroids that do not respond to levothyroxine.

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

- Liothyronine 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 liothyronine 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, liothyronine should not cause any side effects. If too much liothyronine is given, your pet may experience racing heartbeat, excessive thirst and urination, excessive hunger, excitement and restlessness, panting and nervousness. If your pet shows these signs, you should contact your veterinarian immediately.
- Liothyronine can severely alter the results of laboratory tests. You should tell your veterinarian that your pet is taking liothyronine before any laboratory testing is performed.

How Should It Be Given?

- Liothyronine should be given exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. If your veterinarian has prescribed liothyronine for your cat to do a T3 suppression test, you will give the drug every 8 hours for 7 treatments and then take the cat back to the veterinarian to have a blood sample drawn within 2-4 hours of the last dose.

- 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 do not generally receive this drug, but if so they receive it orally three times daily. Cats will receive this drug to perform a test to diagnose hyperthyroidism. You will be instructed to give your cat a dose of liothyronine every 8 hours for 7 doses. A blood sample must then be taken 2-4 hours after the last dose to determine if your cat is hyperthyroid or not.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?

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