Pentoxifylline

How Is This Medication Useful?
- Pentoxifylline is used to increase the life span of red blood cells and increase blood flow to areas that do not get enough blood. Non-healing skin ulcers are an example of this kind of condition. Pentoxifylline is also used to treat the poisons given off in the intestines by bacteria during horse colic (endotoxemia). It is also used for Sickle Cell Anemia in humans.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?
- Pentoxifylline should not be used in patients that are allergic to it or to drugs like it (aminophylline, theophylline, caffeine).
- Animals who have or have had bleeding in the brain or eyes should also not receive pentoxifylline. Pentoxifylline should be used very carefully in animals that may be at risk for any kind of excessive bleeding.
- Because pentoxifylline is removed from the body by the liver and kidneys, it should be used very carefully in animals with liver or kidney disease.
- It is not known if pentoxifylline can be used safely in pregnant animals. It also enters the milk, so should not be used in nursing mothers unless the benefit to the mother is greater than the risk to the babies.
- 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?
- The most common side effect of pentoxifylline is vomiting. Pentoxifylline is in the same drug class as caffeine (coffee). It can cause restlessness, fast heartbeat, dizziness, stomach ache, and even seizures in high doses. This effect may be increased by certain antibiotics known as quinolones.
- If your pet seems unusually restless after receiving pentoxifylline, you should call your veterinarian.

How Should It Be Given?
- Pentoxifylline should be given orally to animals twice to three times daily.
- The human tablets are often too big to give to dogs and cats. Your pharmacist may compound special capsules, medicated treats, or a liquid to give your pet the correct dose. Horses will often receive many of the human tablets as a single dose, and these tablets may be crushed and given with syrup or molasses.
- 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 this medication orally twice to three times daily with food.
- Horses: Horses usually receive this medication orally twice daily as tablets ground up and added to feed, or as a special liquid or paste made by your pharmacist.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?
- Pentoxifylline should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.