

Prescription Label

Patient Name:

Species:

Drug Name & Strength:

Directions (amount to give how often & for how long):

Prescribing Veterinarian's Name & Contact Information:

Refills:

[Content to be provided by prescribing veterinarian]

Buspirone

(byoo-spye-rone)

Description:

Antianxiety Agent

Other Names for this Medication:

BuSpar®

Common Dosage Forms:

Veterinary: None. **Human:** 5 mg, 7.5 mg, 10 mg, 15 mg, & 30 mg tablets. Compounded dosage forms may be available.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication and has not been reviewed by FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine. This sheet can help answer commonly asked questions but is not a substitute for medical advice. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Key Information

- ▶ May be given either with food or on an empty stomach. If animal vomits or acts sick after getting it on an empty stomach, give with food or small treat to see if this helps. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ May take a few weeks for the full benefits of this medication to be seen.
- ▶ Do not use a flea collar on your animal while it's getting this medicine without first talking to your veterinarian. If your animal has worn a flea collar in the past 2 weeks, let your veterinarian know.
- ▶ Buspirone is usually well tolerated by dogs and cats. Cats may show increased affection while taking it.

How is this medication useful?

Buspirone is an antianxiety medication. Veterinarians use it for treating fears, especially those associated with social interactions, in cats and dogs. Buspirone can also be helpful in treating urine spraying or motion sickness in cats.

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in humans, but it is not officially approved for use in animals. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe products containing this drug in different species or for other conditions in certain situations. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this drug is the most appropriate choice.

What should I tell my veterinarian to see if this medication can be safely given?

Many things might affect how well this drug will work in your animal. Be sure to discuss the following with your veterinarian so together you can make the best treatment decisions.

- ▶ Other drugs can interact with buspirone, so be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you give your animal, including the amount and time you give each.
- ▶ Some ingredients found in flea and tick collars can interact with buspirone, so let your veterinarian know if your animal has worn one in the past 2 weeks.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your animal may have now or has had in the past.
- ▶ If your animal has been treated for the same disease or condition in the past, tell your veterinarian how well the treatment did or didn't work.
- ▶ If your animal is pregnant or nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this drug.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian and pharmacist about any medication side effects (including allergic reactions, lack of appetite, diarrhea, itching, and/or hair loss) your animal has developed in the past.

How long until I will know if this medication is working, and how long will the effects of this medication last?

This medication takes several doses before you will see any effect. The medication's full effects may not be evident until your animal has taken it consistently for several weeks, but you will see a gradual improvement of your animal's clinical signs until the medication becomes fully effective.

The effects of this medication are short-lived, meaning they will stop working within 24 hours, although the benefits may be prolonged if your animal has decreased kidney and/or liver function.

When should this medication not be used or be used very carefully?

No drug is 100% safe in all patients, but your veterinarian will discuss with you any specific concerns about using this drug in your animal.

This drug **SHOULD NOT** be used in patients:

- ▶ That are allergic to it.

This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in animals that:

- ▶ Have kidney or liver disease. Buspirone is removed from the body by the kidneys and liver.
- ▶ Are working or assistance dogs. Buspirone does not reduce alertness as much as some other drugs used for anxiety or nervousness, but it may reduce awareness.
- ▶ Are aggressive. Some veterinary behavior specialists are concerned that using this type of drug in aggressive animals may allow them to act out their aggressive tendencies more easily; this is controversial.

If your animal has any of these conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks versus benefits.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Common, but not serious side effects include:

- ▶ Increased affection, friendliness, and playfulness (particularly in cats). This may be the reason the drug is being used. Sometimes decreased affection can occur.
- ▶ More aggression, especially in households with more than one cat.
- ▶ Sedation and drowsiness.
- ▶ Reduced appetite, nausea (acting "sick").
- ▶ Changes in heart rate.

You don't have to be overly concerned if you see any of these signs unless they are severe, worsen, or continue to be a problem. Contact your veterinarian if this happens.

Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:

- ▶ Continued vomiting, small pupils, weakness, or stumbling could mean the dose is too high.

If your animal has any of these signs, contact your veterinarian immediately.

If my animal gets too much of this medication (an overdose), what should I do?

Overdoses of buspirone can be serious. If you witness or suspect an overdose, contact your veterinarian or an animal poison control center for further advice. Animal poison control centers that are open 24 hours a day include: **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** (888-426-4435) and **Pet Poison HELPLINE** (855-764-7661); a consultation fee is charged for these services.

How should this medication be given?

Give this medication exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. It's a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.

- ▶ May be given with or without food. If your animal vomits or acts sick after receiving the drug on an empty stomach, try giving the next dose with food or a small treat. If vomiting continues, contact your veterinarian.
- ▶ If you have difficulty getting your animal to take the medicine, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help dosing and reducing the stress of medication time.
- ▶ This medication can be given for various lengths of time. Be sure you understand how long your veterinarian wants you to continue giving this medication. Prescription refills may be necessary before the therapy will be complete. Before stopping this medication, talk to your veterinarian, as there may be important reasons to continue giving it.
- ▶ After giving buspirone for longer periods of time, suddenly stopping this medication may cause unwanted behaviors to return.

What should I do if I miss giving a dose of this medication?

If you miss a dose, give it when you remember. However, if it is close to the time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed, and give it at the next scheduled time. After that, return to the regular dosing schedule. Do not double-up or give extra doses.

How should I store this medication?

- ▶ Store this medication in the original prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder (ie, pill minder) container at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the storage recommendations and expiration date for the product.
- ▶ Keep away from children and other animals.

Can handling this medication be hazardous to me, my family, or other animals?

There are no specific precautions required when handling this medication unless you are allergic to it. Wash your hands after handling any medication.

How should I dispose of this medication if I don't use it all?

- ▶ Do not flush this medication down the toilet or wash it down the sink. If a community drug "take-back" program is available, use this option. If there is no take-back program, mix the drug with coffee grounds or cat litter (to make it undesirable to children and animals and unrecognizable to people who might go through your trash), place the mixture in a sealable plastic bag to keep it from leaking out, and throw the bag out with the regular trash.
- ▶ Do not save leftover medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?

- ▶ Buspirone may take several weeks before it starts to work. In some animals, behavior problems may begin again after they seem to improve. Like all behavioral treatments, buspirone usually works best in combination with behavior modification therapy.
- ▶ Use of this drug may not be allowed in certain animal competitions. Check rules and regulations before entering your animal in a competition while this medication is being administered.
- ▶ Flea collars that contain amitraz (Preventic®) may interact with buspirone; only use flea-preventive therapies that your veterinarian recommends.

If you have any other questions about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Special Instructions:
