



EAST COAST VETERINARY CARDIOLOGY

Amlodipine

Drug Classification & Information

Amlodipine is a calcium channel blocker. It is classified as an arterial vasodilator meaning it acts on the systemic arteries to cause vasodilation to cause relaxation of the arteries. The pills may be difficult to cut as the pills may crumble. Compounding this medication into an appropriate dosage therefore may be an option for some smaller animals.

Indications for Use

Amlodipine is typically prescribed to treat systemic hypertension in animals. It is also prescribed in animals with congestive heart failure (CHF) to increase vasodilation which may help improve forward cardiac output.

Potential Drug Interactions

Amlodipine should be used in caution with other medications that may lower the blood pressure, such as diuretics and other vasodilators (ACE inhibitors). When combined with these other classes of medications, it is important to monitor for potential hypotension and call a veterinarian if noted.

Drug Side Effects

Side effects may include lethargy, weakness or reduced appetite. Some of these side effects may improve after the first several days of therapy – if they persist or worsen, contact a veterinarian. Although uncommon, amlodipine could cause a significant drop in blood pressure and cause fainting. In rare cases, some animals can develop gingival hyperplasia (overgrowth of gum tissue). This should resolve with discontinuation of the medication.

Therapeutic Monitoring

Blood pressure should be trended while taking this medication – 1-2 weeks after initiation of therapy then generally every 3-4 months.

Dosage Forms

Human: 2.5, 5 and 10 mg tablets.

