



EAST COAST VETERINARY CARDIOLOGY

Carnitine

Drug Classification & Information

Carnitine is a nutritional supplement that has been used in animals with dilated cardiomyopathy. It is essential for normal fat utilization & energy metabolism in the body. It is considered a costly supplement.

Indications for Use

Carnitine may help some dogs with dilated cardiomyopathy – however, response to carnitine therapy (i.e.: improvement) is low. It may have benefit in protecting against doxorubicin-induced cardiomyopathy.

Potential Drug Interactions

No significant drug interactions noted.

Drug Side Effects

This nutritional supplement is well tolerated with no significant side effects reported. Rare causes of vomiting and diarrhea have been reported.

Therapeutic Monitoring

When used for patients with dilated cardiomyopathy, serial echocardiograms are recommended to follow heart function. Improvement may take several months to be noted but generally less than 5% of patients will respond.

Dosage Forms

It is recommended to use only the L (levo) forms. The D-form may competitively inhibit L-uptake with resulting deficiency. Can obtain powder from health food stores – if used, mix completely with food for administration.

