



EAST COAST VETERINARY CARDIOLOGY

Carvedilol

Drug Classification & Information

Carvedilol is classified as both an alpha and a beta blocker. It is classified as a non-selective beta blocker with selective alpha blocking effects (alpha-1 receptor blocker). These receptors respond to adrenaline.

Indications for Use

Carvedilol may be used as an adjunctive therapy for patients with CHF. It may also be used to treat irregular heart rhythms (arrhythmias) particularly supraventricular arrhythmias. It has been shown to be useful in humans with dilated cardiomyopathy and CHF. Occasionally used in patients with systemic hypertension. Few veterinary studies available.

Potential Drug Interactions

Carvedilol should be used in caution with other anti-arrhythmics (other beta blockers, calcium channel blockers, amiodarone) as the combination may lead to bradycardias (slow heart rate). Should be used with caution in medications that may also lower blood pressure (amlodipine, ACE inhibitors) as they may cause hypotension. Can increase digoxin levels and cause digoxin toxicity.

Drug Side Effects

Carvedilol should be used in caution in a patient with CHF with a gradual up titration of dosage. Monitoring for lethargy, poor appetite or weakness is recommended. It should be used in caution in patients with a history of airway disease as it can contribute to bronchospasm.

Therapeutic Monitoring

If used for anti-arrhythmic effects, electrocardiograms (ECGs) or Holter monitors are used to assess treatment efficacy. Systemic blood pressure may be monitored if used in combination with other medications that may lower blood pressure.

Dosage Forms

Human: 3.125, 6.25, 12.5 & 25 mg tablets

