

Gabapentin (Neurontin®)

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SUMMARY:

- 1) Gabapentin is generally a safe and well tolerated medication. It can cause mild sedation and ataxia.
- 2) Never stop or change a medication without first speaking with a veterinarian.

EXPLANATION:

Gabapentin is a medication that is most often used to help control pain, but it also is occasionally used as a seizure medication. When used as a seizure medication, the goal of this medication is to make your pet's seizure less frequent and less severe. It is unlikely that any seizure medication will make your pet 100% seizure free.

When used as a pain medication, it can be given between one and three times a day. Some patients will need to take it on a strict schedule, while other patients may take a baseline amount and use more only if needed. Ask your veterinarian for guidance on how to use this medication.

MONITORING:

This medication is generally considered safe, and no blood work monitoring is currently recommended for the average patient. All pets on long term medication are encouraged to see their veterinarian at least once a year for a check up.

SIDE EFFECTS:

This medication seems to be very well tolerated overall. The following side effects have been reported.

- 1) Some pets will act sleepy or drunk while their body adjusts to the medication. It can take two weeks for some pets to adjust. If your pet is especially uncoordinated, keep them away from things like swimming pools and staircases until they are more sure on their feet.
- 2) Very rarely vomiting and diarrhea is reported with this medication.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

- 1) If your pet is on a liquid preparation, check with your veterinarian and pharmacist to ensure that the medication does not have xylitol as an ingredient.
- 2) If your pet is on antacids (Famotidine, Omeprazole), these medications should be given at least two hours apart.

