

# Levetiracetam (Keppra®)

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## SUMMARY:

- 1) Levetiracetam is generally a safe and well tolerated medication. It can cause mild sedation and incoordination.
- 2) Levetiracetam must be given on schedule (three times a day) for maximal effectiveness.
- 3) Never stop or change seizure medication without first speaking with a veterinarian.

## EXPLANATION:

Levetiracetam is an anticonvulsant or seizure medication. The goal of this medication is to make your pet's seizures less frequent and less severe. It is unlikely that any seizure medication will make your pet 100% seizure free.

It is very important to give this medication on schedule. Make a note of when you need refills, and try to get them at least one week in advance. Set a timer on your watch or phone to help remind you to give the medication on schedule.

This medication is usually given three times a day (every 8 hours, or in the morning, the late afternoon and before bedtime) and may be given with or without food.

## MONITORING:

We recommend visits twice a year to discuss how your pet is doing. At these visits, your vet may want to check blood work.

In all pets on this medication we recommend yearly general blood work (called a CBC and Chemistry) and a urinalysis. Depending on your pet's seizure control, drug levels may also be recommended once to twice a year, as well as after dose changes.

## SIDE EFFECTS:

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

- 1) GI side effects including inappetence, vomiting and diarrhea
- 2) Some pets will act sleepy or drunk while their bodies adjust to the medication. It can take two weeks for some pets to adjust. If your pet is especially incoordinated, keep them away from things like swimming pools and staircases until they are more sure on their feet.

## 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.



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