

## Pain Drugs for Dogs and Being an Informed Owner

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

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Controlling your dog's pain is essential to his overall well-being. Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) are a class of drugs commonly used to control pain and inflammation in dogs. NSAIDs help many dogs lead more comfortable lives.

### What are NSAIDs?

NSAIDs help to control signs of arthritis, including inflammation, swelling, stiffness, and joint pain. Inflammation—the body's response to irritation or injury—is characterized by redness, warmth, swelling, and pain. NSAIDs mediate the production or function of prostaglandins (enzymes) involved in inflammation. Some NSAIDs may also be used to control the pain and inflammation following surgery.

Your veterinarian may prescribe an NSAID to treat the pain of osteoarthritis in your dog or to control pain following a surgical procedure.

All NSAIDs approved for oral use in dogs and cats come with a Client Information Sheet (also known as the Information for Dog Owner Sheet) that describes the drug's side effects. Dog and cat owners should ask veterinarians for the Client Information Sheet when an NSAID is prescribed. These Client Information Sheets provide the pet owner with important information in a user-friendly manner regarding what can be expected from use of the drug, potential side effects, and the need to seek veterinary attention if problems occur. By accompanying each NSAID prescription with the Information for Dog Owner Sheet, a handy reference of valuable safety information and drug company contact information is readily available to the owner.

Veterinary NSAIDs approved for use in dogs:

- ETOGESIC (etodolac) - not currently marketed
- RIMADYL (carprofen)
- METACAM (meloxicam)
- DERAMAXX (deracoxib)
- PREVICOX (firocoxib)
- ZUBRIN (tepoxalin) - not currently marketed
- NOVOCOX (carprofen)
- VETPROFEN (carprofen)
- CARPRIEVE (carprofen)
- QUELLIN (carprofen)
- OROCAM (meloxicam)
- LOXICOM (meloxicam)
- MELOXIDYL (meloxicam)

- ONSIOR (robenacoxib) for a maximum of 3 day use
- GALLIPRANT (grapiprant)

In the United States, there is one NSAID approved for up to three days use in cats to control pain associated with surgery: ONSIOR (robenacoxib) tablets or ONSIOR (robenacoxib) injection. Meloxicam injection is approved for a single injection to control pain associated with surgery in cats.

### **What should you discuss with your veterinarian?**

NSAIDs offer pain relief and improved quality of life to many dogs. However, before giving an NSAID, or any drug, you should first talk to your veterinarian.

You should discuss:

- what the NSAID is being prescribed for
- how much to give
- how long to give it
- possible side effects
- what to avoid while your dog is taking an NSAID
- what tests are needed before giving an NSAID to your dog
- how often should your dog be re-examined
- your dog's previous medical history and any previous drug reactions
- all medications and products your dog currently receives

### **What should you know before giving your dog an NSAID?**

- Never give aspirin or corticosteroids along with an NSAID to your dog.
- NSAIDs should be approached cautiously in dogs with kidney, liver, heart and intestinal problems.
- Never give your dog an NSAID unless directed by your veterinarian.
- Don't assume an NSAID for one dog is safe to give to another dog. Always consult your veterinarian before using any medication in your pet.
- Only give the NSAID as prescribed by your veterinarian. Do not increase the dose, the frequency, or the length of time you use the drug unless first discussing this with your veterinarian.

### **What side effects should you watch for?**

Most NSAID-side effects are mild, but some can be serious, including death in rare situations. Common side effects seen with the use of NSAIDs in dogs may affect the kidneys, liver, and gastrointestinal tract and may include:

- Not eating or eating less
- Lethargy, depression, changes in behavior
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea, black tarry-colored stool
- Yellowing of gums, skin, or the whites of the eyes
- Change in drinking
- Changes in skin (scabs, redness, or scratching)

### **What to do?**

**If you suspect a possible side effect to an NSAID, STOP giving the drug to your dog and call your veterinarian immediately!**

**When Giving Your Best Friend an NSAID, Remember these Signs:**

**Behavior Changes**

**Eating Less**

**Skin Redness, Scabs**

**Tarry Stool/Diarrhea/Vomiting**

**FRIEND**

**STOP the Drug & Call Your Veterinarian!**

*(Courtesy of the [FDA](#))*

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