

## CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: **December 2014**

# Sotalol

- **Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again.**
- **Please ask your vet or veterinary nurse if you have any further questions.**
- **This medicine has been prescribed for *your* pet ONLY. Do not take it yourself or give it to another person or any other animal; it may harm them even if their symptoms appear to be the same.**

The medicine you have been given for your dog or cat is called sotalol. It may have a trade name such as Beta Cardone® or Sotacor®, but often will just be called sotalol.

### What is sotalol?

Sotalol belongs to a group of medicines called *beta-adrenoceptor blocking drugs* or *beta-blockers*. These drugs slow down the heart rate and reduce the amount of work being done by the muscles of the heart. As a result beta-blockers help reduce blood pressure.

### Why has my pet been prescribed sotalol?

Sotalol is used to treat the more severe cardiac arrhythmias (abnormalities of the heart beat), originating from different parts of the heart wall, particularly the ventricles (the lower heart chambers). Such arrhythmias can develop in dogs with a condition called dilated cardiomyopathy, where there is abnormal enlargement of the heart. This condition more commonly affects the larger breeds. Your dog will require regular checks and ECGs (recording of the electrical activity of the heart) whilst on treatment.

### How should I store sotalol?

This medicine does not require special storage conditions. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

### How do I give sotalol tablets to my pet?

Try to disguise them in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Alternatively, they can be placed carefully on the back of the pet's tongue and their mouth held closed until the entire tablet has been swallowed.

### How long will my pet need to take sotalol?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients but may be for the rest of their life.

### What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try not to run out. Make sure you order more tablets from your vet if your supply is getting low. If you do run out, contact your own vet for further advice and restart the course as soon as possible.

### What should I do if I miss a dose?

If a dose is missed, give the medication as soon as possible. However, it is best to skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your pet's next scheduled dose. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed dose and do not exceed the total stated dose in any one 24-hour period.

### What should I do if my pet is accidentally given too many doses?

**Contact your vet immediately** if your pet is given an overdose of sotalol as this can be life-threatening. Sotalol overdose can cause a slow heart rate, extreme tiredness, coughing and difficulty in breathing.

### Can my pet take sotalol if I am already giving them other drugs?

Tell your vet if you are giving your pet any other medications, even if you think they already know. This includes herbal or off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop or pharmacy. Do not give your pet sotalol if they are already taking phenylpropanolamine (used to treat urinary incontinence). Great care is required when using sotalol with other drugs that affect blood pressure, heart rate and heart function. Your vet will advise you on this. Sotalol can prolong the effects of insulin and so close monitoring of diabetic patients is required.

### What are the possible side effects of sotalol for my pet?

Sotalol can cause a slow heart rate, low blood pressure, depression, vomiting and

diarrhoea, and potentially push a patient into signs of heart failure (e.g. coughing, fatigue and increased effort when breathing). Sotalol may also cause a specific abnormality of the heart beat called 'torsades de pointes' that runs the risk of sudden death. If your pet shows any unusual symptoms whilst taking this medication, please contact your vet **immediately**.

### What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking sotalol?

If your pet is unwell while receiving this medication, you should not give any further doses and should **contact your vet immediately**.

### What should I do if a person accidentally takes this drug?

If a person accidentally takes your pet's tablets, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets plus their container (even if it is empty) with you.

### Whom do I contact if I want to know more?

If you have any questions about this drug, or concerns about your pet's health, contact your own vet. They will know your pet's medical history and will know about sotalol.

### The Prescribing Cascade

This medicine is authorized for use in human patients and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. The medicine is not authorized by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), for use in dogs/cats/pets. Your vet can explain the 'prescribing cascade' in further detail to you and also explain why they are prescribing this drug for your pet. You will be asked to sign a consent form stating that you understand the reasons that the drug is being prescribed and its possible complications, before the treatment is issued.

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