



## Client Information Leaflet

# Corticosteroids

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- Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again.**
- Please ask your vet if you have any further questions.**
- The medicine prescribed for your horse is classed a corticosteroid. 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 and could result in inadvertent contravention of Horse Passport legislation**

This medicine has been prescribed or given for you horses or donkey. The drug is a form of corticosteroid that may include triamcilonone, prednisolone, dexamethasone or betamethasone. Other drugs of this class carry the same characteristics, although they last for different periods of time. Although drugs in the category are licensed for use in the horse by injection or in feed, other formulations may be appropriate for your horse

**What are corticosteroids?** Corticosteroids are potent drugs that target inflammation. They can be given by a variety of routes in animals that have severe inflammatory conditions including skin, lung and joint inflammation.

**Why has my horse been prescribed corticosteroids?** Corticosteroids are used to treat a variety of disorders of horses, including joint disease, skin diseases (eg sweet itch) and lung diseases (eg recurrent airway obstruction). They can also be used as part of the diagnostic test for equine Cushing's disease.

**How should I store and handle these medicines?** For safety, all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children. There are no special storage requirements. If you are crushing large numbers of tablets it is recommended that you wear gloves to do so, alternatively wash you hands thoroughly after handling.

**What should I do if I run out of this medicine?** Usually your vet will dispense the correct amount of the product. If you run out, you should contact your veterinary surgeon to complete the course as soon as

possible. You should not stop treatment suddenly without discussing this with your vet.

**What should I do if I accidentally overdose my horse?** Contact your vet,. Large doses can cause severe laminitis and therefore your vet may be able to discuss appropriate strategies to manage your horse

**What should I do if I miss a dose?** If a dose is missed just give the next dose at the normal time. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed dose.

**If my horse is not improving what should I do?** Contact your veterinary surgeon who will review whether this is the correct drug for your horse.

**Can my horse take corticosteroids along with other medicines?** Tell your vet if you are giving your horse any other medicines.

**What do I need to record in my horse's passport?** These medicines are not authorised for use in horses intended for human consumption. Some medicines in this class are listed as being *essential for the treatment of horses* and can be used in

animals destined for human consumption as long as this does not occur until 6 months after the last dose. If your horse's passport has not been signed to exclude it from the human food chain your veterinary surgeon must record this in your horse's passport.

**What are the possible side effects of corticosteroids in my horse?** Corticosteroids can impair your horses immune system. If your horse becomes unwell and has a temperature you should contact your vet as soon as possible. In some cases your vet may advise you to take your horses temperature on a regular basis to help identify if an infection develops. The most important side effect of corticosteroids is laminitis. Although this is very rare, when it happens it can be very severe. If you horse starts to become lame or unwilling to move please contact your veterinary surgeon immediately.

**What should I do if a person accidentally takes this medicine?**

If a person accidentally takes this medicine you should contact NHS direct (telephone 111) or take the person to a local hospital taking this leaflet and the package with you



**The prescribing cascade:** This medicine is authorised for use in human patients or other animal species and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. The medicine is not authorised by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), for use in horses. Your vet can explain the 'prescribing cascade' in further detail to you and also explain why they are prescribing this drug for your pet. If you do not agree to the use of this medicine in your horse you should discuss this with your veterinary surgeon.

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