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Chlorhexidine Topical

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What is chlorhexidine topical?



Chlorhexidine topical (brand names Chlorhex®, Novalsan®, ChlorhexiDerm®) is an

antiseptic used to treat surface bacterial and/or fungal skin infections in cats and dogs. This medication may be part of a combination product that includes other medications, such as ketoconazole, Triz EDTA, and/or a steroid. This medication is available over the counter (OTC) but should only be used under the direction of a veterinarian.

It may be used “off label” or “extra label” in other species. Many drugs are commonly prescribed for off-label use in veterinary medicine. In these instances, follow your veterinarian’s directions and cautions very carefully.

How do I give my pet chlorhexidine topical?

Chlorhexidine topical comes in shampoo, liquid, ointment, or wipe form.

- Shampoos, liquids (sprays or droppers), ointments, and wipes are applied topically directly onto the skin.
- Follow your veterinarian’s directions for the specific product prescribed for your pet.
- Wash hands after applying or wear gloves when applying this medication.
- Avoid contact with eyes.
- Do not let any animal lick or chew affected sites for at least 30 minutes after application.
- Give this medication to your pet for the entire time prescribed by your veterinarian, even if it appears that your pet is feeling better.

What if I miss giving my pet the medication?

Give the missed dose as soon as you remember and then continue with the regular dosing schedule. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with the regular schedule. Do not give the pet two doses at once.

Are there any potential side effects from chlorhexidine topical?

Chlorhexidine topical may cause the following side effects:

- irritation or reddening of skin at application site
- corneal ulcers if product contacts eye

The following reactions are rare; if they occur, **contact your veterinarian immediately**:

- an **allergic reaction** such as irregular breathing, rash, fever, puffiness and swelling around the face

Drug sensitivities can develop over time with repeated exposure. Your pet may have no reaction after the first few doses but may develop a sensitivity later. It is important to watch for signs of an allergic reaction over the entire course of treatment.

Other side effects may occur. If you notice anything unusual, contact your veterinarian immediately.

Are there any risk factors for this medication?

AVOID this medication in animals allergic to any component.

Use **CAUTION** when:

- giving this medication long term
- giving this medication as part of a combination product containing a steroid
- using this medication on wounds, as it may impair wound healing

Are there any drug interactions I should be aware of?

No known drug interactions have been reported for chlorhexidine as a sole agent. Be sure to tell your veterinarian about any medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) that your pet is taking before starting any new treatment.

Is any monitoring needed with this medication?

Your veterinarian may schedule a follow-up visit after the course of medication is complete to ensure the infection has been cleared and/or do additional testing to ensure this is the right medication for the type of infection present. In this case, follow your veterinarian’s directions.

How do I store chlorhexidine topical?

- Store the medication in its original container, at room temperature.
- Protect from heat, light, and moisture.
- Do not freeze.
- Keep medication out of reach of children and pets.

What should I do in case of emergency?

If you suspect an overdose or an adverse reaction to the medication, call your veterinary office immediately. If they are not available, follow their directions in contacting an emergency facility.

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Benzoyl Peroxide: Topical

Benzoyl peroxide topical products (2%, 5%) are used in cats and dogs to treat bacterial infections of the skin. They are available as over-the-counter veterinary products in the form of shampoos, gels, and cream rinses.



Ketoconazole Topical

Ketoconazole topical is an antifungal used in the treatment of skin infections caused by fungal organisms in cats, dogs, and other animals. It comes in a variety of forms that may be specially compounded and/or be combined with other medications.



Phytosphingosine Topical

Phytosphingosine topical (brand names Douxo®, SkinGuard®) is an anti-inflammatory agent, with antibacterial and antifungal properties. It is used in cats and dogs to help relieve itching in certain skin conditions and help restore the skin barrier. Phytosphingosine topical may be part of a combination product.

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