

Afoxolaner

What is afoxolaner?

Afoxolaner (brand name NexGard®) is used to treat and control flea and tick infestations in dogs. After being ingested by a dog, afoxolaner is distributed throughout the dog's body. When fleas or ticks bite the dog, they are exposed to the drug and killed during their blood meal. Sometimes afoxolaner is used for the treatment of sarcoptic mange or demodectic mange. When afoxolaner is prescribed for the treatment of mange, it is referred to as '**extra label**' or '**off label**' use. Many drugs are commonly prescribed for off label use in veterinary medicine. In these instances, follow your veterinarian's directions and cautions very carefully, as their directions may be significantly different from those on the label.

How quickly does it kill fleas?

Following exposure, the majority of fleas will be killed within hours of biting an afoxolaner-treated dog. This medication begins to kill fleas after 4 hours and it takes at least 12 hours to start to kill ticks. Keep in mind that you will likely continue to see fleas on a treated dog for some time, especially if you have a flea infestation in your home. Fleas continue to hatch and climb onto your dog in search of a blood meal. The fleas' death prevents reproduction and new eggs being laid in the home. The more fleas that climb onto the dog and are killed, the faster the infestation will be eliminated.

How do I give my dog afoxolaner?

Afoxolaner is given by mouth in the form of a chewable tablet. The tablet should always be given as directed by your veterinarian. It can be given with or without food or water. Be sure the dog consumes the entire dose. If your dog vomits within 2 hours of dosing, give another full dose. Try giving the next dose with food.

What if I forget to give my dog the medication, or my shipment is late?

Give the missed dose as soon as you remember and start a new monthly dosing schedule. For example, if you forgot to give your pet his/her dose on June 1st and remember on June 18th, give the dose on June 18th and start a new monthly schedule. The next dose your pet will receive would be on July 18th. Do not give your dog two doses at once.

Are there any potential side effects from afoxolaner?

The majority of dogs have very few side effects from afoxolaner, provided it is given according to label recommendations and at the prescribed interval (or for off-label use, according to the directions given by your veterinarian). If you observe any abnormal signs (such as vomiting, dry/flaky skin, diarrhea, lethargy, and lack of appetite) contact your veterinarian. At that time, make sure your veterinarian is aware of any other medications/natural remedies that you are giving to your dog.

This long-acting medication lasts for at least 4 – 6 weeks, and may last longer in pets with kidney or liver disease.

Are there any risk factors for this medication?

Afoxolaner should be used with caution in dogs with a history of seizures. Afoxolaner has not been evaluated in breeding, pregnant, or lactating dogs.

Are there any drug interactions that I should be aware of?

At this time, there are no known drug interactions reported with afoxolaner. Be sure to tell your veterinarian about any medications (**including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies**) that your pet is taking.

Is there any monitoring that needs to be done with this medication?

There is no specific monitoring required for dogs receiving afoxolaner.

How do I store afoxolaner?

Store afoxolaner-based products at room temperature in a cool, dry place, away from heat.

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.

Rania Gollakner, BS DVM

© Copyright 2018 LifeLearn Inc. Used and/or modified with permission under license.