

Prescription Label

Patient Name:

Species:

Drug Name & Strength:

Directions (amount to give how often & for how long):

Prescribing Veterinarian's Name & Contact Information:

Refills:

[Content to be provided by prescribing veterinarian]

Chlorambucil

(*klor-am-byoo-sil*)

Description:

Anticancer Agent; Immunosuppressant

Other Names for this Medication:

Leukeran®

Common Dosage Forms:

Veterinary: None. **Human:** 2 mg tablet. A compounded liquid suspension may be available.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication and has not been reviewed by FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine. This sheet can help answer commonly asked questions but is not a substitute for medical advice. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Key Information

- ▶ Chlorambucil is a chemotherapy (anticancer) and immunosuppressive drug. The drug and its byproducts can be hazardous to animals and people that come in contact with it.
- ▶ On the day your animal gets the drug and for a few days afterward, all its bodily fluids (ie, urine, feces, blood, vomit) should only be handled while wearing disposable gloves. Seal the waste in a plastic bag, then place the bag and gloves in the regular trash.
- ▶ Give this drug with food, as chlorambucil can cause gastrointestinal upset (eg, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea).

How is this medication useful?

Chlorambucil is used to treat a variety of cancers in animals as well as some conditions associated with an overactive immune system. The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in humans, but it is not officially approved for use in animals. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe products containing this drug in different species or for other conditions in certain situations. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this drug is the most appropriate choice.

What should I tell my veterinarian to see if this medication can be safely given?

Many things might affect how well this drug will work in your animal. Be sure to discuss the following with your veterinarian so together you can make the best treatment decisions.

- ▶ Other drugs can interact with chlorambucil, so be sure to tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you give your animal, including the amount and time you give each.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your animal may have now or has had in the past.
- ▶ If your animal has been treated for the same disease or condition in the past, tell your veterinarian about the treatment and how well it did or didn't work.
- ▶ If your animal is pregnant or nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this drug.
- ▶ Tell your veterinarian and pharmacist about any medication side effects (including allergic reactions, lack of appetite, diarrhea, itching, hair loss) your animal has developed in the past.

How long until I will know if this medication is working, and how long will the effects of this medication last?

This medication takes several days until beneficial effects occur. Full effects of this medication may not be evident for several weeks. However, side effects (eg, upset stomach or low energy level) may occur right away. Improvement of clinical signs will be gradual over the time that it takes the medication to reach its full efficacy. The effects of this medication are moderate in duration, meaning they may last for a few days, although the benefits may be prolonged if your animal has decreased kidney and/or liver function.

When should this medication not be used or be used very carefully?

No drug is 100% safe in all patients, but your veterinarian will discuss with you any specific concerns about using this drug in your animal.

This drug **SHOULD NOT** be used in patients that have:

- ▶ Had an allergic reaction to chlorambucil.
- ▶ Impaired bone marrow function.
- ▶ An infection.

This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in patients:

- ▶ Susceptible to infections (eg, because of hyperadrenocorticism, diabetes mellitus, advanced age, chronic disease).

If your animal has any of these conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks versus benefits.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Side effects with chlorambucil may come on slowly and tend to be most severe about 1-2 weeks after the drug is started.

Common but not serious side effects include:

- ▶ Dogs: Loss of fur. Many dogs receiving chemotherapy will have minor hair coat changes (eg, shagginess, loss of luster). Breeds with continuously growing hair coats (eg, poodles, terriers, Afghan hounds, or old English sheepdogs) are more likely to experience significant hair loss.

Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:

- ▶ Low energy level or fever.
- ▶ Lack of appetite, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- ▶ Bleeding or bruising.
- ▶ Difficulty breathing.
- ▶ Agitation (ie, anxious, nervous, upset, unable to relax).
- ▶ Facial or eye twitching.
- ▶ Seizures (rare).

Contact your veterinarian immediately if you see any of these signs.

If my animal gets too much of this medication (an overdose), what should I do?

Chlorambucil overdoses, no matter how small, can be fatal and should be considered an emergency. If you witness or suspect an overdose, contact your veterinarian or an emergency veterinary clinic immediately. Additional advice can be obtained from animal

poison control centers that are open 24 hours a day including: **Pet Poison HELPLINE** (855-764-7661) and **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** (888-426-4435); a consultation fee is charged for these services.

How should this medication be given?

For this medication to work, give it exactly as your veterinarian prescribed. It's a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.

- ▶ Always wear gloves when administering this medication.
- ▶ Give chlorambucil with food.
- ▶ Compounded liquid forms of this medication must be measured carefully. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can help by providing special measuring spoons or syringes.
- ▶ If you have difficulty getting your animal to take the medicine, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help dosing and reducing the stress of medication time.
- ▶ This medication can be given for various lengths of time. Be sure you understand how long your veterinarian wants you to continue giving this medication. Prescription refills may be necessary before the therapy will be complete. Before stopping this medication, talk to your veterinarian, as there may be important reasons to continue its use.

What should I do if I miss giving a dose of this medication?

This drug must be dosed very carefully. Contact your veterinarian for further instructions if you miss a dose.

How should I store this medication?

- ▶ Chlorambucil tablets and compounded suspensions should be stored securely in the refrigerator and protected from light. If accidentally left outside of the refrigerator, chlorambucil tablets can tolerate temperatures up to 86°F for 1 week.
- ▶ Compounded chlorambucil suspensions must be discarded if left outside of the refrigerator, even if only for a few hours.
- ▶ Keep away from children and other animals.

Can handling this medication be hazardous to me, my family, or other animals?

- ▶ This drug can cause serious adverse effects in people and animals that are exposed to it. Wear disposable gloves when handling this medication. Do not reuse gloves. Once used, gloves or bags must be thrown out in the trash. Do not allow the drug to come into contact with your skin, eyes, or mouth.
- ▶ Chlorambucil can be found in any of the treated animal's secretions, including, saliva, vomit, urine, and feces. Wear gloves when cleaning the cat litter box or picking up dog droppings and when cleaning up urine or vomit. Do not let treated animals lick human skin. If skin exposure occurs, the area should be washed thoroughly with soap and water. Pregnant women **SHOULD NOT** handle this drug.

How should I dispose of this medication if I don't use it all?

- ▶ Do not flush this medication down the toilet or wash it down the sink. If a community drug "take-back" program is available, use this option. If there is no take-back program, mix the drug with coffee grounds or cat litter (to make it undesirable to children and animals and unrecognizable to people who might go through your trash), place the mixture in a sealable plastic bag to keep it from leaking out, and throw the bag out with the regular trash.
- ▶ Do not save leftover medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?

- ▶ Your veterinarian will need to perform follow up examinations and blood tests on your animal after it receives this medication. Do not miss these important follow-up visits.
- ▶ Do not give your animal any vaccinations while receiving this drug without first consulting your veterinarian.
- ▶ In the interest of public safety, do not take your dog to a dog park or allow your animal to urinate and defecate in public places until your veterinarian tells you that it is okay to do so.
- ▶ Your animal should not participate in animal competitions while on this drug. Exposure to other animals may put your animal at serious risk of infections during chemotherapy treatment. Talk with your veterinarian about when it is safe to return to these events.

If you have any other questions about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

Special Instructions
