

# Benadryl and Pets

## Drug is Used to Treat Allergic Skin Disease Among Other Symptoms

Benadryl is one of many brand names of Diphenhydramine, an antihistamine commonly used in humans for the treatment of allergy symptoms, hay fever and the common cold.

In pets, diphenhydramine can be used to treat bee and hornet stings and insect bites, as well as treating allergic skin disease.

While Benadryl can be a good emergency drug to give your pet should the need arise — such as while out camping or hiking with your pooch — it's important to speak with your veterinarian beforehand to ensure Max is prescribed a dose based on his age, weight and health history.

### Benadryl Toxicity

It's essential for pet owners to remember that although diphenhydramine is relatively safe for most pets, when mixed with other medications it can be lethal.

For example, Benadryl comes in many different formulations — allergy, sinus, headache, etc. — and can also contain other medications, such as acetaminophen (the type of drug used for humans to relieve fever, headaches, and other minor aches and pains), which can be toxic to a pet.

**Before pet owners treat their pets with Benadryl, they should buy the medication and take the package into their veterinarian's office to ensure they are using the correct product.**



### Well-Intended Pet Owners Unknowingly Poison their Pets

Veterinary Pet Insurance (VPI) recently ranked the top toxic substances by the number of medical claims received in 2007. Shockingly, the most dangerous poisons by far are human medications intentionally given to pets by their owners.

VPI received more claims for drug reactions than all other poisoning claims combined in 2007. Many of these claims involved pets given drugs intended for human consumption, such as over-the-counter pain relievers. Pet owners often give pets over-the-counter or prescription drugs for their ailments, unaware that even given in small amounts, many of these drugs cannot be metabolized by pets fast enough to prevent an overdose.

### Use Benadryl Wisely

Dr. Cori Gross, a field veterinarian for VPI, recommends that before pet owners treat their pets with Benadryl, they should buy the medication and take the package into their veterinarian's office to ensure they are using the correct product.

In addition to being proactive with their pet's health and practicing responsible pet ownership, Gross explains that, "Diphenhydramine isn't ideal for every pet, so it's very important for pet owners to consult with their veterinarian to make sure they are being properly treated for their ailments."

As always, all medications should be kept out of the reach of pets. If you suspect your pet is ill or if your pet is showing signs of poisoning, seek veterinarian help immediately.

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