

FAMCICLOVIR

BRAND NAME: FAMVIR

Available as
125 mg, 250 mg and 500 mg
TABLETS

BACKGROUND

We have had antibacterial antibiotics since World War II but antiviral medications have been more elusive. Only in recent years have meaningful medications been developed. Famciclovir is a human medication developed to treat herpesvirus infections in humans. It turns out to have activity against herpesvirus in cats. Famciclovir works by interfering with DNA replication in the herpesvirus. This prevents the virus from multiplying but famciclovir cannot actually kill the virus nor can it eliminate a herpes infection.

HOW THIS MEDICATION IS USED

If famciclovir is used at an appropriate dose, it will not only treat the viral respiratory symptoms but it will get into the tears and treat the viral conjunctivitis as well. Twice daily oral dosing is sufficient and a two to three week course is typical.

Famciclovir can be given with or without food. If a dose is accidentally skipped, pick up at the next scheduled dose. Do not double up on doses.

SIDE EFFECTS

Feline side effects have mostly been appetite loss and increased thirst/urination. Rarely, a reduction in certain white blood cell levels can occur. A dose reduction has been recommended for cats with known insufficient kidney function.

Humans report upset stomach and headache as the most common side effects. We do not know if this holds for cats. Some cats have shown appetite loss.

CONCERNS AND CAUTIONS

Famciclovir should be given on an empty stomach for best absorption but can be given with food if there is an issue with upset stomach.

Dosages should be reduced in patients with reduced kidney function.

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Additional drug and general pet care information can be found on our world wide web site:

<http://www.marvistavet.com>