

Acepromazine: Tranquilizer

Following surgery, your pet will need enforced inactivity for a period of several weeks. Strict exercise restriction means: no running, no jumping, no on and off furniture, no up and down stairs. If you have other animals in the house, or children that play with or come in contact with your injured pet, please keep them separated unless you can fully supervise all interaction. Activity must be limited to very short leash walks for the purpose of your pet going to the bathroom only. Your pet should be kept in an enclosed area such as a small yard, dog run, or a small room in the house preferably with solid footing to prevent slipping.

Most patients do not cooperate with the above described mandatory exercise restriction. To help with this, your pet has been sent home with Acepromazine. This is a potent Promazine-based tranquilizer, and the intent of its use is to "take the edge off" your pet, making him/her more content to be less active in the post-operative phase of their rehabilitation. Acepromazine has a quite variable effect from animal to animal. Because of this, it can be difficult to know the exact dosage appropriate for your pet. We recommend an average dose, based on your pet's size, and that dose may then be adjusted by you to achieve the desired effect. It is extremely difficult to overdose and cause significant harm with this drug. A high dose will result in severe tranquilization, however, which will be manifested as a deep sleep. Some pets can be difficult to arouse from this deep sleep for several hours. What most typically happens with a high dose is that the pet will sleep for approximately 12 hours and then wake up and be normal. Side effects that your pet may exhibit while on Acepromazine are: altered breathing patterns, shivering, blood shot eyes, and protrusion of the third eyelid (a pink fleshy eyelid that people don't have, in the inner corner of the eye socket).

Animals that have been lightly tranquilized with Acepromazine can be aroused out of their tranquilization. That is, should they see an appropriate stimulus, their adrenaline will start flowing and they can act normal for a while. However, once they have been placed in a quiet environment, the tranquilizer will again take hold and they will become tranquil.

Acepromazine is readily metabolized by the liver. As you continue to administer this drug to your pet, the liver will become more adept at getting rid of the drug in your pet's system. Hence, you may need to increase the drug dose almost on a weekly basis, to continue to achieve the desired sedative effect. We recommend increasing the drug by 1/2 tablet at a time. Generally, the drug should be given three times a day, as needed. When a dose is given, it will take 20-30 minutes for the drug to take effect. Obviously, the longer

your pet needs to be on Acepromazine, the more judicious should your use of the drug be, as within several week's time the liver becomes so adept at getting rid of the drug that an extremely high dose of the tranquilizer no longer has any effect. Interestingly, within a few weeks of discontinuing Acepromazine, your pet will once again become susceptible to a very low dose of the drug. **This drug is not addictive.**

In very few cases some pets may have an abnormal reaction to Acepromazine and become hyperactive, aggressive, or suffer a personality change. This is extremely rare and the effects go away as the drug wears off. Some pets, (especially spayed females) may also have mild urinary incontinence while on the drug.

Some people do not feel comfortable with the side effects of this medication. The purpose of placing your pet on this drug is to decrease their tendencies to become over active and undo or damage the repairs made during surgery. If you can achieve your pet's tranquility through confinement, or if their inherent personality is mellow, then minimal use of this drug would be needed.

Please do not hesitate to contact the doctors or staff at the Veterinary Surgical Centers of the Delta at VetCare Emergency and Specialist Care Center in Dublin if you have any questions regarding the use of this medication.