

Tramadol Information



Tramadol (Ultram) is a synthetic morphine-like pain medication that is commonly used by itself or in combination with other pain medications. This drug can be used in dogs and in cats. It is available only in 50 mg tablets but can be compounded for smaller animals.

Dosing

The dose range for Tramadol is fairly wide (2-5mg/kg up to five times daily). At CASE, we prefer to give 3mg/kg up to 4 times daily.

Side effects

The most common side effect of the drug is altered mentation/bizarre behavior and sedation. In some animals, the sedative effects of this drug can be useful after surgery. Every animal responds differently to Tramadol, so if you see too much sedation or behavioral changes, please decrease the dose. Other side effects are rare but include the following:

- Stomach upset (vomiting, diarrhea)
- Pupil constriction
- Panting
- Constipation
- Seizures

Overdose

While Tramadol has a wide dose range, overdose can cause life-threatening problems such as seizures. If you notice pinpoint pupils or significantly altered mentation, please contact us immediately.

Drug interactions

Tramadol should not be used with the following medications:

- L-Deprenyl (Anipryl, Eldepryl, Carbox) – used to treat Cushing's disease or to control senility
- S-Adenosylmethionine (SAME, Denosyl, Zentonil) – used to treat liver disease
- Many psychoactive drugs such as serotonin reuptake inhibitors, tricyclic antidepressants, or monoamine oxidase inhibitors

Other information

Tramadol can safely be given to nursing bitches. Since Tramadol is eliminated via the kidney and liver a lower dose will be recommended in animals suffering from diseases affecting these organs or systems. Tramadol should be avoided in animals with seizures.

A human product called Ultracet® is available but should NEVER be used in cats. It contains another drug called acetaminophen which can cause life-threatening side-effects in cats.

If Tramadol is given for a long time period, it should be tapered slowly rather than discontinuing it abruptly