

Aliso Beach Animal Clinic
Dr. Susan Davis, D.V.M.
Dr. Paul Reid, D.V.M.
30816 Coast Hwy.
South Laguna, CA 92651
(949) 499-4190

Antihistamine Therapy For Dogs

Antihistamines are not a cure-all for the allergic patient, but they provide an alternative to steroids for symptomatic relief. Antihistamines appear to work well in about one-third of allergic dogs and cats. They can also be combined with other safe forms of therapy, such as fatty acid supplements and medicated baths. If necessary, they can also be used to lessen the amount of cortisone (steroid) needed to control a problem.

To determine whether an antihistamine is effective, try one for a minimum of 7-10 days. You may need to try three or four different products before finding one that is effective. Just because one product doesn't work, don't assume that none will.

Most antihistamines are relatively safe for routine use. Be aware, however, that most preparations intended for human use have not been approved for use in animals.

* * *

In the chart below, several available antihistamine products are listed. To use the chart, follow these steps.

1. Choose a product from the chart.
2. Find the proper dose for your pet's body weight. If there is more than one dose, start with the lowest dose first and increase the dose only if there is no improvement after one week.
3. Find out how many times a day to give the antihistamine by looking under the daily doses column. If there is a choice, begin at the smallest number of doses and increase the number only if the pet does not improve after one week.

| GENERIC NAME | TRADE NAME | FORMS | DOSE (BY BODY WEIGHT) | | | | | DAILY DOSES |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| | | | 2-11 lbs | 11-22 lbs | 22-33 lbs | 33-55 lbs | >55 lbs | |
| Diphenhydramine hydrochloride | Benadryl | 2.5 mg/ml oral liquid | 1/2 - 1 tsp | 1 - 2 tsp | — | — | — | 2 - 3 |
| | | 25 mg capsule | — | — | 1 | — | — | |
| | | 50 mg capsule | — | — | — | 1 | 2 | |
| Clemastine | Tavist | 1 mg tablet | — | 1/2 | 1 | 1 1/2 | 2 | 2 |
| Chlorpheniramine | Chlortrimeton Chlortripolon (in Canada) | 0.5 mg/ml oral liquid | 1 tsp | — | — | — | — | 2 - 3 |
| | | 4 mg tablet | — | 1 | 2 | 2 1/2 | 3 | |
| Brompheniramine | Dimetapp | 0.4 mg/ml oral liquid | 1 tsp | — | — | — | — | 2 - 3 |
| | | 4 mg tablet | — | 1 | 2 | 2 1/2 | 3 | |
| Trimeprazine tartrate | Temaril Panectyl (in Canada) | 2.5 mg tablet | 1/2 | 1 | — | — | — | 2 - 3 |
| | | 5 mg tablet | — | — | 1 tablet | — | — | |
| | | 10 mg tablet | — | — | — | 1 tablet | 2 tablets | |
| Terfenadine | Seldane | 6 mg/ml oral liquid | 1/2 - 1 tsp | — | — | — | — | 2 |
| | | 60 mg tablet | — | 1/2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| Astemizole | Hismanal | 2 mg/ml oral liquid | 1/2 - 1 tsp | — | — | — | — | 1 - 2 |
| | | 10 mg tablet | — | 1/2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| Hydroxyzine | Atarax | 10 mg capsule | 1 | — | — | — | — | 3 |
| | | 25 mg capsule | — | 1 | — | — | — | |
| | | 50 mg capsule | — | — | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| Cetirizone hydrochloride | Zyrtec | 5 mg tablets | 1/2 - 1 | 1-2 | — | — | — | 1 |
| | | 10 mg tablets | — | — | 1 | 1 | 1 - 2 | 1 |

