



My cat needs gabapentin

This information sheet is for owners whose cats require the administration of gabapentin prior to our visit.

What is gabapentin?

Gabapentin is a human medicine designed for many things; one being the reduction of neuropathic pain. However, if used at certain levels it can achieve a sedative effect. It is not currently licensed for use in cats, but it has been demonstrated that it can be used safely, even with the more senior patient.

When is Gabapentin used?

It can be used to help with fractious or anxious cats prior to their veterinary examination.

When a cat gets so distressed that handling is impossible.

To make procedures like blood sampling stress free.

When and how should I give Gabapentin?

Gabapentin comes in three forms – powder in a capsule, tablet, or liquid.

What is dispensed will largely depend on the individual cat and owner.

It should be given in a very small amount of food approximately 2 hours before the visit.

For those that want to give the tablet version but know that their cat will inevitably know it is there and eat around it, there is Easypill putty. It is a moldable treat that can cleverly hide the tablet inside.

The liquid type is chicken flavoured but this doesn't appeal to all our patients.

What effects will Gabapentin have on my cat?

Each cat's response to the medication is variable. While some seem completely sedated, others show little or no changes. The common things to notice are:

- Appearing drunk or confused
- Wobbling whilst walking
- Sleeping deeply then suddenly awake when roused
- Staring into space/at a wall
- Muscle twitching
- Vomiting (often only as a result of too much food given with the medication)

After gabapentin

Again, the recovery from Gabapentin can vary in the length of time for each individual.

The drowsiness can range from 8-24 hours.

During this time, we advise that the cat is kept indoors, as climbing in this state could be very detrimental.

A small amount of their normal food can be offered once they are up and walking about again.

If there is anything that you are concerned about with regards to the use of gabapentin please don't hesitate to speak to one of the team.