

-Gabapentin Facts

What is Gabapentin?

- Gabapentin is a neuropathic pain analgesic and anticonvulsant medication which has been shown to be beneficial in cats for reducing fear responses associated with transportation, handling, and examination.
 - The mechanism of action is not completely understood but appears to bind to a subunit of the voltage-gated calcium channels, decreasing calcium influx, and inhibiting the release of excitatory neurotransmitters.
 - By reducing excitation in the brain, cats are better able to cope with the new environment of our Cat Condo boarding facility.

How is Gabapentin given?

- Gabapentin is an encapsulated powder that can be opened and sprinkled onto your pet's food or onto a palatable treat, such as whipped cream or tuna juice.
 - Please let us know if you have a preference for how Gabapentin is given to your cat.
- We recommend preparing your cat for its stay our hospital by pre-medicating with Gabapentin 1-2 hours prior to the journey here.
 - Ask us about taking home Gabapentin for pre-emptive medication for your cat's next stay with us!

What are the potential side effects of Gabapentin?

- Sedation or ataxia (incoordination) are the most common adverse effects of Gabapentin.
 - We believe a sleepy cat is preferable to a stressed cat in a boarding environment.
 - The dose we use (50-100mg per cat) did not cause measurable sedation in confined community cats in one study.
- As with any new oral medication, vomiting and diarrhea are always possible
 - Gastrointestinal upset is usually self-limiting and can be treated with a probiotic (Provable Forte) if indicated.
- If your cat experiences any adverse effects of Gabapentin, we will discontinue use and provide treatment if necessary.

Who should not take Gabapentin?

- Due to its renal excretion, it is recommended to use Gabapentin with caution in cats with kidney disease.
 - This means a lower dose may be more appropriate for your cat and does not necessarily preclude them from benefiting from short-term use of Gabapentin.
 - Combination with Zylkene, a behavioral supplement, may be helpful in getting the most out of a lower dose of Gabapentin.

Please feel free to speak with one of our veterinarians if you have questions or concerns.