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Semintra (*telmisartan*)

An overview of Semintra and why it is authorised in the EU

What is Semintra and what is it used for?

Semintra is a veterinary medicine used in cats to reduce proteinuria (protein in the urine) and to treat high blood pressure. Proteinuria can occur with chronic (long-term) kidney disease in cats, a common disease in elderly cats characterised by a progressive deterioration of kidney function over time. High blood pressure is also a long term problem of ageing cats which can occur with chronic kidney disease, hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid gland) and other conditions.

How is Semintra used?

Semintra is available as a solution to be given by mouth and can only be obtained with a veterinary prescription. Two different strengths are available: 4 mg/ml to reduce proteinuria and 10 mg/ml to treat high blood pressure. The medicine is given once a day by mouth using the measuring syringe provided. The recommended dose to reduce proteinuria is 1 mg telmisartan per kg bodyweight. To treat high blood pressure an initial dose of 2 mg telmisartan per kg bodyweight is used. After 4 weeks the dose can be reduced in cats with systolic blood pressure (SBP) of less than 140 mmHg. The target SBP is between 120 and 140 mmHg.

How does Semintra work?

The active substance in Semintra, telmisartan, is an 'angiotensin II receptor antagonist', which means that it blocks the action of a hormone in the body called angiotensin II. Angiotensin II is a powerful vasoconstrictor (a substance that constricts blood vessels). By blocking the receptor to which angiotensin II normally attaches, telmisartan stops the hormone having an effect, allowing the blood vessels to expand. This allows blood pressure to drop with a resulting decrease in protein in the urine which may slow down progression of kidney disease.

What benefits of Semintra have been shown in studies?

In a field study involving 224 cats with chronic kidney disease, aged mainly over 11 years, Semintra was as effective as benazepril, another veterinary medicine used to reduce proteinuria, in reducing proteinuria. Semintra decreased protein in the urine within the first seven days after the start of treatment.

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In a second field study involving 294 cats with hypertension with average age 13 years, 194 cats given Semintra once a day for 28 days had a reduction of SBP of 25 mmHg at day 28 compared to 11 mmHg for 100 cats given placebo (a dummy treatment). At the end of the 28 days Semintra treated cats continued to be treated for an additional 92 days and these cats had a reduction of SBP of more than 20 mmHg for the entire 4 month study period.

What are the risks associated with Semintra?

The most common side effects seen with Semintra are mild and short-lived vomiting and diarrhoea (which may affect up to 1 in 10 cats treated with the 10 mg/ml strength solution).

For a full list of all side effects reported with Semintra, see the package leaflet.

Semintra must not be given to pregnant or lactating cats.

What are the precautions for the person who gives the medicine or comes into contact with the animal?

If Semintra is swallowed accidentally, medical advice should be sought immediately and the package leaflet or label shown to the doctor. The person administering Semintra should avoid getting it in their eyes. If contact with the eyes occurs they should be rinsed with water. Hands should be washed after giving the medicine. Pregnant women should take special care to avoid contact with the product. People who are hypersensitive to telmisartan or other angiotensin II receptor antagonists should avoid contact with Semintra.

Why is Semintra authorised in the EU?

The European Medicines Agency decided that Semintra's benefits are greater than its risks and it can be authorised for use in the EU.

Other information about Semintra:

Semintra received a marketing authorisation valid throughout the EU, on 13 February 2013.

Further information on Semintra can be found on the Agency's website: ema.europa.eu/Find medicine/Veterinary medicines/European public assessment reports.

This overview was last updated in March 2018.