Diphenhydramine
(Benadryl)

**Common Drug Name**
Diphenhydramine

**Common Brand Names**
Benadryl

Generic products are available.

**Storage**
Store at room temperature in a tight, light resistant, childproof container.

**Uses**
Diphenhydramine is an antihistamine. It is used for the treatment of allergies and atopy, primarily to stop itching in dogs and cats. (Atopy is an allergy to something that is inhaled, such as pollen or house dust; also called 'inhalant allergy.') It may also be used to control vomiting and motion sickness, as a mild sedative, and to treat muscle tremors due to certain toxins or medications.

**Dose and Administration**
Always follow the dosage instructions provided by your veterinarian. If you have difficulty giving the medication, contact your veterinarian.

If you miss a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the one you missed and go back to the regular schedule. Do not give 2 doses at once.

This medication should only be given to the pet for whom it was prescribed.

**Possible Side Effects**

**Dogs:** Side effects include sleepiness, sedation, dry mouth, and inability to urinate. Less commonly may see vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite.

**Cats:** Side effects include sleepiness, sedation, or hyperexcitability (agitation). May also see dry mouth, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, or inability to urinate.

Consult your veterinarian if you notice any of the above side effects.

If your pet experiences an allergic reaction to the medication, signs may include facial swelling, hives, scratching, sudden onset of diarrhea, vomiting, shock, seizures, pale gums, cold limbs, or coma. If you observe any of these signs, contact your veterinarian immediately.

**Precautions**
Not for use in animals hypersensitive (allergic) to diphenhydramine or similar medications.

Use with caution in animals with hyperthyroidism, heart disease, high blood pressure, certain types of glaucoma, enlarged prostate, obstructive pulmonary (lung) disease, asthma, or obstruction of the urinary bladder (problems urinating), or obstruction of the pylorus (junction between the stomach and intestine).

The safety of this medication in pregnant and lactating animals (female animals nursing their young) has not been determined.

Do not use in working animals (military dogs, police dogs, seeing eye dogs, hearing dogs, etc.) as it may cause too much sedation.

Cats dislike the taste of the unflavored, liquid form of this medication.

Consult with your veterinarian regarding the physical examinations and laboratory testing necessary prior to and during treatment with diphenhydramine.

**Drug, Food, and Test Interactions**
Consult your veterinarian before using diphenhydramine with any other medications, including vitamins and supplements, other central nervous system (CNS) depressant drugs such as barbiturates, antidepressants, anesthetics, or tranquilizers; heparin, warfarin, or epinephrine, since interactions may occur.

No known food interactions.

Discontinue use at least 4 days prior to skin allergy testing.

**Signs of Toxicity/Overdose**
May cause increased sedation, coma, hyperexcitability, or seizures; severe drying of the mouth and eyes; rapid heart beat; depressed respiration; inability to urinate; and low blood pressure.

If you know or suspect your pet has had an overdose, or if you observe any of these signs in your pet, contact your veterinarian immediately.

*Keep this and all other medications out of the reach of children and pets.*