Pharmacy Spotlight: Soloxine®

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

- **Medication type:**
  Prescription-only, the synthetic form of one of the thyroid hormones called "T4".
- **Active ingredient:**
  Levothyroxine Sodium
- **Dosage form:**
  Tablet
- **Manufacturer:**
  Virbac
- **Major use:**
  For the treatment of hypothyroidism.
- **How it works:**
  Levothyroxine is the generic name for synthetic thyroxine, a thyroid hormone replacement drug. It provides thyroid replacement therapy in all conditions of inadequate production of hormones produced naturally by the thyroid gland. Lack of thyroid hormone causes hypothyroidism, characterized by lack of energy and weight gain. It is a disease commonly seen in middle age and older dogs. Levothyroxine is the most commonly prescribed thyroid hormone replacement drug.

Soloxine® SUCCESS STORY:

Dog's Name: Zipper
Breed: Shetland Sheepdog
Age: 7 years

His story: Zipper was an active Sheltie, having been involved in obedience, agility, and flyball. He even won some ribbons at regional dog shows. He was a beautiful dog with a full coat and strutted around as though he knew it.

Zipper had always been a slim dog, since he had a high activity level and because his owner made sure he got the proper nutrition. That is why, when Zipper was 6 years of age and had a behavior change in the course of a few weeks, his owner became concerned. Zipper began not to enjoy

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his daily walks, and when he went to his agility class, he stopped right in the middle of the course. His owner also noticed that Zipper was losing more of his gorgeous coat than usual, and even though it was summertime, he always seemed to be curled up as though he were cold. She made an appointment with her veterinarian for the next day.

The veterinarian examined Zipper and took his recent history. She determined that Zipper needed a thyroid blood test, which measures the amount of thyroid hormone in the blood. A low amount indicates "hypothyroidism," that is, an underactive thyroid gland. The symptoms that Zipper's owner was reporting matched the symptoms of this condition. When the veterinarian got the blood test results, she saw that the Sheltie had a low level of the thyroid hormone called "T4". She gave Zipper's owner a prescription for Soloxine®, which is a synthetic form of this thyroid hormone, and said Zipper should come back for follow-up blood tests to see if his levels of medication needed to be adjusted. Once the veterinarian determined how much of the medication Zipper needed in order to get his T4 level back to normal, he would be on this medication for life, with blood tests yearly for the rest of his life.

Outcome: A few months after he was put on Soloxine®, Zipper was back to his old self. He is 7 years of age now, and enjoys all the activities he once did. He gets regular blood tests as recommended by his veterinarian, and has only needed his medication adjusted once during that time.

For full details on this medication, download the free patient information sheet.

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