



Azathioprine

Calms an overactive immune system

Your vet has prescribed azathioprine for your pet. It slows down the production of immune cells, calming an immune system that is attacking the body. The label on your pet's medicine always comes first, so keep this with it and ask us anything you're unsure about.

What is it used for?

- Treating conditions where the immune system attacks the body, such as some blood, skin, gut or joint diseases.
- Often used with steroids so the steroid dose can be lowered.

How quickly does it work?

- It works slowly. It can take 2 to 6 weeks to reach its full effect.

How do I give it?

- Give exactly as the label says, usually with food.
- It can take several weeks to reach its full effect.

What if I miss a dose?

- Give it when you remember, unless the next dose is nearly due. In that case skip the missed one.
- Never give two doses together to catch up.
- If your pet vomits soon after a dose, call us before giving another.

Possible side effects

- Vomiting, diarrhoea or reduced appetite.
- Reduced blood cell counts, which can increase the risk of infection or bleeding.
- Rarely, liver or pancreas problems.

Monitoring and check-ups

- Blood tests are usually done every 2 weeks at first, then every 1 to 3 months.
- Liver values and blood cell counts are checked.

Important things to know

- This is a chemotherapy-type medicine. Wear disposable gloves to handle it and wash your hands afterwards.
- Never split or crush tablets or open capsules. Anyone pregnant, breastfeeding or trying for a baby should not handle it.
- After each dose, wear gloves to clear up urine, faeces or vomit and double-bag it. Ask us how many days to do this for.
- **Azathioprine is for dogs only. It must never be given to cats.**
- Tell your vet about any other medicines, supplements or flea and worm treatments your pet has.
- Store safely out of reach of children and other pets. This medicine is for your pet only.

Your questions answered

- **Why does my dog still need steroids?** They work quickly while azathioprine builds up. Steroids are then often reduced.
- **Can my dog have vaccines?** Ask your vet. Live vaccines may need to be avoided.

Call us straight away on 01843 808344 (24/7) if:

- Your pet has a fever, is lethargic or shows signs of infection.
- Your pet has unusual bleeding or bruising, yellow gums or severe tummy pain.
- You think your pet (or anyone else) has taken too much.

Mango's Top Tip

Blood tests are your dog's best friend on this medicine. Book the next one before you leave!