Ferrous Sulfate
(fair-us sul-foyte)

Description: Iron Supplement

Other Names for this Medication: Fer-In-Sol®, Feosol®

Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary: None. Human: 140 mg (45 mg iron) & 325 mg (65 mg iron) delayed & extended release tablets; 75 mg/mL (15 mg iron/mL), 220 mg/5 mL (44 mg iron/5 mL), 300 mg/5 mL (60 mg iron/5 mL) oral liquid or elixir.

Key Information

- Oral iron supplement for treatment of iron-deficiency anemia or for animals receiving hormone replacement therapy with epoetin or darbepoetin.
- Best given with food to avoid stomach upset, but do not give with dairy products (including cheese).
- Side effects include vomiting or nausea. If black tarry stools or bloody vomit are seen, contact your veterinarian immediately.
- Overdoses can be life-threatening to animals or children; keep well out of reach.

How is this medication useful?

In dogs and cats, oral iron therapy (using ferrous sulfate) is used to treat iron-deficiency anemia and as supportive therapy in animals with end-stage kidney disease receiving hormone replacement therapy with epoetin (erythropoietin) or darbepoetin. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this drug is the most appropriate choice.

What should I tell my veterinarian to see if this medication can be safely given?

Many things might affect how well this drug will work in your animal. Be sure to discuss the following with your veterinarian so together you can make the best treatment decisions.

- Other drugs and foods (such as dairy products) can cause problems when taken with this drug, so tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, herbal therapies, or treats) you are giving your animal, as well as the amount and schedule of each.
- Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your animal may have now or has had in the past.
- If your animal has been treated for the same disease or condition in the past, tell your veterinarian about the treatment and how well
it did or didn’t work.

▶ If your animal is pregnant or nursing, talk to your veterinarian about the risks of using this drug.
▶ Tell your veterinarian and pharmacist about any medication side effects (including allergic reactions, lack of appetite, diarrhea, itching, hair loss) your animal has developed in the past.

**How long until I will know if this medication is working, and how long will the effects of this medication last?**

This medication should start having effects within 1 to 2 days; however, you will not see the effects of this medication outwardly. Your veterinarian will need to run further tests to determine if the medication is working appropriately. The effects of this medication are moderate in duration, meaning they may last for a few days, although the benefits may be prolonged if your animal has decreased kidney and/or liver function.

**When should this medication not be used or be used very carefully?**

No drug is 100% safe in all patients, but your veterinarian will discuss with you any specific concerns about using this drug in your animal.

This drug **SHOULD NOT** be used in patients:

▶ That are allergic to it.

This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in patients:

▶ That have hemolytic anemia.
▶ That have a condition known as hemosiderosis or hemochromatosis.
▶ That have stomach or intestinal ulcers.

If your animal has any of these conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks versus benefits.

**What are the side effects of this medication?**

**Side effects that usually are not serious include:**

▶ Vomiting, nausea (“acting sick”). Give with food, but not dairy products. If your animal continues to vomit or act sick after getting this medication, contact your veterinarian to see if you can give a lower dose more often.

You don’t have to be overly concerned if you see any of these signs unless they are severe, worsen, or continue to be a problem. Contact your veterinarian if this happens.

**Side effects that may be serious or indicate a serious problem:**

▶ GI (gastrointestinal) bleeding. Iron can make feces appear black, which does not necessarily mean there is a problem, but bleeding in the GI tract can also make feces appear black. If your animal’s stools are tarry black or there is blood in your animal’s vomit, contact your veterinarian immediately to be sure that your animal is not bleeding internally.

**If my animal gets too much of this medication (an overdose), what should I do?**

Overdoses of ferrous sulfate or other iron products can be extremely serious. If you witness or suspect an overdose, immediately contact your veterinarian or an animal poison control center for further advice. Animal poison control centers that are open 24 hours a day include: **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** (888-426-4435) and **Pet Poison HELPLINE** (855-764-7661); a consultation fee is charged for these services.

**How should this medication be given?**

For this medication to work, give it exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. It’s a good idea to always check the prescription label to be sure you are giving the drug correctly.

▶ This medicine is best given with food, but avoid giving with dairy products.
▶ If also giving oral antacids, be sure to separate doses by at least 2 hours.
▶ Liquid forms of this medication must be measured carefully. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can help by providing special measuring spoons or syringes.
▶ If you have difficulty getting your animal to take the medicine, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help with dosing and reducing the stress of medication time.
▶ Patients are usually on this medication for an extended period, often for the rest of their lives. Give this medication according to the label’s instructions and obtain refills as needed. Before stopping this medication, talk to your veterinarian, as there may be important reasons to continue its use.

**What should I do if I miss giving a dose of this medication?**

If you miss a dose, give it when you remember, but if it is close to the time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and give it at the next scheduled time. After that, return to the regular dosing schedule. Do not double-up or give extra doses.
How should I store this medication?
- Store this medication in the original prescription bottle or an approved dosage reminder container (ie, pill minder) at room temperature and protected from light.
- If your veterinarian or pharmacist has made (compounded) a special formulation for your animal, follow the storage recommendations and expiration date for the product.
- Keep away from children and other animals. Iron overdoses can be life threatening.

Can handling this medication be hazardous to me, my family, or other animals?
There are no specific precautions required when handling this medication unless you are allergic to it. Wash your hands after handling any medication.

How should I dispose of this medication if I don’t use it all?
- Do not flush this medication down the toilet or wash it down the sink. If a community drug “take-back” program is available, use this option. If there is no take-back program, mix the drug with coffee grounds or cat litter (to make it undesirable to children and animals and unrecognizable to people who might go through your trash), place the mixture in a sealable plastic bag to keep it from leaking out, and throw the bag out with the regular trash.
- Do not save leftover medication for future use or give it to others to use.

What other information is important for this medication?
- Your veterinarian may need to do periodic blood tests on your animal while taking this medicine. Do not miss these important follow-up visits.
- Use of this drug may not be allowed in certain animal competitions. Check rules and regulations before entering your animal in a competition while this medication is being administered.

If you have any other questions about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.