Flunixin Meglumine (Horses)

(floo-nix-in meh-gloo-meen)

**Description:** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agent (NSAID)

**Other Names for this Medication:** Banamine®, Suppressor®

**Common Dosage Forms: Veterinary:** 50 mg/mL injection; 1500 mg/syringe oral paste; 250 mg/10 g pkt & 500 mg/20 g pkt oral granules.

**Human:** None.

This information sheet does not contain all available information for this medication. It is to help answer commonly asked questions and help you give the medication safely and effectively to your animal. If you have other questions or need more information about this medication, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist.

**Key Information**

- Injectable and oral NSAID for pain relief and control of inflammation.
- Not for use in horses to be consumed by humans.
- Do not inject into neck muscles or into arteries.
- Give oral forms with food or mixed with molasses.
- When used for 5 days or less, flunixin is well tolerated.

**How is this medication useful?**

Flunixin is used to control pain and inflammation in horses and some other species.

The FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration) has approved this drug for use in horses for treating pain and inflammation for up to 5 days. The FDA allows veterinarians to prescribe and use products containing this drug in different species or for other conditions in certain situations. You and your veterinarian can discuss why this drug is the best choice for your horse.

**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. It is very important to discuss the following things with your veterinarian so that together you can make the best decisions for treating your horse.

- Other drugs can interact with this drug, so tell your veterinarian and pharmacist what medications (including vitamins, supplements, or herbal therapies) you are giving your horse, as well as the amount and schedule of each.
- Tell your veterinarian about any conditions or diseases your horse may have now or may have had in the past.
If your horse 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 horse 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) your horse 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 hours; 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 horse.

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

- Horses that are allergic to it or other NSAIDs (eg, diclofenac, phenylbutazone).
- Horses to be used for human consumption.
- Dogs or cats. There are safer NSAIDs for use in these species.

This drug should be used **WITH CAUTION** in horses that:

- Are receiving other NSAIDs (eg, diclofenac, phenylbutazone); there is an increased chance for side effects.
- Have kidney, liver, or blood disorders.
- Have stomach ulcers.
- Do not experience pain relief after the first dose. Additional doses may not be effective and may increase the chance for side effects.
- Have colic. Flunixin may mask the behavioral or cardiopulmonary signs that can be seen with colic and delay needed treatment.

If your horse has any of these signs, talk to your veterinarian about the possible risks of using the medication versus the benefits that it might have.

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

When used as labeled (up to 5 days) flunixin is usually well tolerated by horses. The risk for side effects occurring increases if used at higher doses, for longer periods of time, or with other NSAIDs.

*Side effects that usually are not serious include:*

- Pain, localized swelling, and stiffness when injected into the muscle.
- Sweating after an injection.

If any of these signs are severe, persistent, or worsen, contact your veterinarian.

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

- Ulcers or lack of appetite. Oral or stomach ulcers are possible, especially if the drug is used for longer than 2 weeks.
- Muscle infection and damage (eg, clostridial myonecrosis; rare) after injection into the muscle.
- Low protein levels in the blood (rare).
- Blood disorders (very rare).

Your veterinarian will recommend regular monitoring of your horse to ensure the medication is being tolerated well. If you see any of the above signs, contact your veterinarian immediately.

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

If you witness or suspect an overdose, 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.
By Injection:
- Flunixin is injected in the vein (IV) or in the muscle (IM). It is recommended that horses with colic get the drug IV. IV injections are best administered by a veterinarian.
- The medicine must not be injected into neck muscles or arteries. Injections into arteries can cause stimulation (hysteria), ataxia, rapid breathing, and weakness. Be sure you understand how to give the shot and the location(s) to do so safely.
- Do not mix with any other drugs; they may chemically inactivate each other.
- If you are injecting this medication at home, place used needles and syringes in a sharps disposal container immediately after use. Your veterinarian or pharmacist will help you obtain these containers. Be careful not to accidentally stick yourself; do not attempt to disconnect the needle from the syringe. Keep containers out of reach of children and animals. Once the disposal container is about ¼ full, dispose of containers according to your community guidelines. Check with your local trash removal services or health department (listed online and in the city or county government [blue] pages in your phone book) to see which disposal methods are available in your area.

Oral:
- Give oral forms of flunixin with food or mixed with molasses.
- Oral paste: See markings on syringe—calibrated in 250-lb. weight increments.
- Liquid flunixin must be measured carefully. Your veterinarian or pharmacist can provide special measuring spoons or syringes.
- If you have difficulty getting your horse to take the medicine, contact your veterinarian or pharmacist for tips to help with dosing and to reduce the stress of medication time for both you and your horse.
- This medication can be given for various lengths of time, so be sure you understand how long the veterinarian wants you to continue giving this medication to your horse. You may need to get refills before the therapy will be complete.

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 vials of the injection, oral paste, or oral granules in their original containers between 36°F - 86°F (2°C - 30°C) and protected from light. Do not allow the injection or paste to freeze.
- 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.

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?
Use of this drug may not be allowed in certain animal competitions. Check the rules for your horse’s sport before entering it in a competition while you are giving it this medication.

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