

Medication for Cat With Cardiomyopathy

CatChannel veterinary expert Arnold Plotnick, DVM, discusses common medication prescribed for heart conditions.

By Arnold Plotnick, DVM

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Q: My vet prescribed furosemide and enalapril for my 14-year-old Domestic Shorthair cat. He is asymptomatic with severe cardiomyopathy. When I went to an online site to save money on meds, it had no (area to purchase enalapril for cats), and said to never give it with furosemide. Can enalapril be safe for cats? Can it be given with furosemide, or is there a better option? I realize that my vet may be exercising judgment in prescribing off-label.

A: Enalapril belongs to a category of drugs called angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (ACE inhibitors). These drugs are often prescribed for heart and/or kidney disorders in cats. They are safe and effective.

The information you read about never giving enalapril with furosemide is erroneous. Furosemide is a diuretic, and is often prescribed for cats with cardiac problems. Many cats with congestive heart failure require multiple drugs to keep their heart condition stable, and it is not uncommon to prescribe enalapril, furosemide, baby aspirin, and perhaps even a second diuretic like spironolactone if the cat's condition warrants it.

The Internet is a wonderful thing, but not everything you read online is accurate. Your cat's drug regimen should be dictated by your veterinarian, not a website.