



**TOLLESON
ANIMAL
CLINIC**

Tolleson Animal Clinic

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Over-the-Counter Antihistamines

Some over-the-counter antihistamines are safe to use to relieve your dog and cat's allergy symptoms. If your pet is on other medications, please consult with us prior to use. Always ensure that the label states the brand name or generic drug name exactly. Many antihistamines can be formulated with other medications that are unsafe for your pet. Do not use these especially if they are the "D" formulas (decongestant.) When in doubt, please call us! Possible side effects include sedation or lethargy, dry mouth, urinary retention, and GI upset and drooling.

Benadryl (diphenhydramine_ HCl): 1 mg per pound of body weight given by mouth up to every 8 hours. Found in 25 mg capsules and tablets and 12.5 mg/tsp liquid formulations.

Chlor-Trimeton (chlorpheniramine maleate) Dose: ½ - 1 tablet (2-4mg) for small dogs; 2 tablets (8 mg) for medium-large dogs; and 3 tablets (12 mg) for large-giant breed dogs given by mouth up to every 8 hours; 1-2 mg per cat every 12 hours. Found in 4 mg tablets.

Claritin (loratadine) Dose: ½ tablet (5 mg) for small dogs and 1 tablet (10 mg) for medium to large dogs given by mouth once daily. Found in 10 mg tablets.

Allegra (fexofenadine HCl) Dose: For dogs, 1 - 2 mg per pound of body weight given by mouth once daily. For cats, 10 mg per cat every 12-24 hours. Found in 30, 60, and 180mgtablets.

Zyrtec (cetirizine HCl) Dose: 5 mg for small dogs and 10 mg for larger dogs once to twice daily. 5mg per cat every 24 hours. Found in 5 and 10 mg film-coated tablets.

Their use is well-documented and the drugs appear to be safe. Some dogs and cats may respond well to one antihistamine and not at all to another one. If no change is seen in your pet's allergy symptoms within one to two weeks, try another antihistamine or schedule a recheck exam for further recommendations and/or testing. If your pet experiences undesirable side effects discontinue the medication and contact a veterinarian immediately.