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Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again. Please ask your vet if you have any further questions.

This medicine has been prescribed for your horse ONLY. Do not take it yourself or give it to another person or any other animal; it may harm them even if their symptoms appear to be the same and could result in inadvertent contravention of Horse Passport legislation.

Quinidine sulphate

This medicine has been prescribed or given for your horse. The drug is called Quinidine sulphate and may have trade names such as Kinidin or Quinidine sulphate BP although other formulations may be dispensed by your veterinary surgeon. Although it is not licensed for use in these species it is being used under the prescribing cascade.

What is Quinidine sulphate? Quinidine sulphate is a medicine that belongs to the group of medicines called anti-dysrhythmics. They are used to correct irregular heart rhythms in horses, most commonly atrial fibrillation.

Why is my horse been treated with Quinidine sulphate? Quinidine sulphate is being administered to control an abnormality of the electrical conduction of your horse's heart. It is given under close veterinary supervision. Once your horse has been treated it should not need lifelong therapy.

What do I need to record in my horse's passport? This medicine is classified as an essential medicine for the treatment of horses, although it is not licensed for use in horses in the EU. If your horse's passport has not been signed to permanently exclude it from the human food chain your veterinary surgeon will need to record the use of this medicine WITHIN THE PASSPORT (not a separate drug record). After the use of quinidine such horses must be excluded from the human food chain for a minimum of six months.

Is Quinidine sulphate safe for my horse? Quinidine sulphate has several potential side effects, some of which can be fatal. Your veterinary surgeon will advise you on the relative risk and potential benefits of treating your horse with this medicine. Alternative methods of treating atrial fibrillation may be appropriate for your horse.

What side effects can occur? The most common side effects, and reason for stopping treatment, before successful 'conversion' of the heart, relate to the intestinal system. These include colic and

diarrhoea. Occasionally the diarrhoea will require intensive fluid therapy that will result in significant increases in costs to manage.

Other side effects relate to the development of further abnormal heart function. When these occur, they can be life threatening and, if not managed immediately, can be fatal. By consenting to the use of Quinidine sulphate it is assumed that you also consent to the use of other lifesaving medicines if they are needed. Your vet will not have time to seek further consent for these medicines if they are needed. Their use will result in additional costs to you.

What is the success rate of treating my horse with Quinidine sulphate? With appropriate case selection, the majority of horses (80%) will respond to treatment with Quinidine sulphate without any important side effects.

If your horse has had atrial fibrillation for a long period (more than 3 months) then the success rate is significantly lower and the frequency of complication is higher. Even if treatment is successful your horse' may develop atrial fibrillation again.

If your horse has underlying heart disease (you vet may tell you your horse has a heart murmur) the success rate is lower, and the complication and recurrence rates are higher.

If I decide not to have my horse treated is it safe to ride?

The evidence regarding safety, or otherwise, is limited. However, the consensus opinion of an independent panel of equine cardiologists suggests that some horses with atrial fibrillation

represent an increase risk of injury to their rider than a normal horse.

In order to further quantify the risk of riding a horse with atrial fibrillation your veterinary surgeon may recommend an exercising ECG (electrocardiogram). However, irrespective of the results of this ECG it must be remembered that horse-riding is a high risk sport and while your vet can help you to understand these risks, they cannot ensure your safety.

Another, sometimes effective, treatment of atrial fibrillation is transvenous direct-current electrocardioversion. This requires specialist equipment and general anaesthesia. Your veterinary surgeon will be able to discuss the relative merits of this therapy over medical treatment.



The prescribing cascade: This medicine is authorised for use in human patients or other animal species and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. Your vet can explain this in further detail and explain why they are prescribing this drug for your horse. If you do not agree to the use of this medicine in your horse you should discuss this before administration.