



**UW Veterinary Care**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

# APOQUEL®

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### What is Apoquel?

Apoquel® (oclacitinib tablets) is an anti-itch, anti-inflammatory medicine with a new and unique mode of action. It is not an antihistamine or a cortisone-type drug. We find that it is generally very effective. Our experience suggests that it works great in around 50%, partially in around 30%, and poorly in 20% of dogs.

### How do I give the tablets?

Apoquel® can be given with or without food. For some dogs, we prescribe it twice daily (morning and night) for a short period of time, then reduce to once per day. For others, we start at once per day. If given once daily, it can be given either morning OR night, depending on when your dog seems most itchy. Ideally, Apoquel® should not be used twice daily over a long period of time, as this may increase the chances for side effects.

### Are there any side effects of Apoquel®?

Owners have generally reported no noticeable side effects. A very few dogs have had a slightly lowered blood count during treatment, which is why we recommend some simple blood tests during the early months of treatment. A few dogs have vomited after administration, though it's not clear this was related to the medication.

### Can I use Apoquel® along with other medications?

Apoquel® is safe to use along with antibiotics, antifungals, anti-arthritis drugs, allergy shots or drops, any flea/tick/heartworm preventive, thyroid supplements, and seizure medications. You should not give the following drugs at the same time as Apoquel® without consulting your veterinarian: cortisone-type medications or Atopica®.

### Does my dog need to have any tests run before starting Apoquel® treatment?

As long as your dog is in good health otherwise, no specific tests are necessary. It's always wise for your pet to have had annual blood tests as part of his/her physical examination, though, and if there are any health questions or concerns, we may recommend these tests be done. Once starting Apoquel®, we recommend a blood count after two months, six months, and one year of treatment.

### Are there any long-term effects of Apoquel® treatment?

There are no known effects of Apoquel® on organs such as the kidneys and liver. Some dogs have been treated with Apoquel for more than five years without any problem, and we do not expect there will be long-term problems. Dogs taking Apoquel® may have a slightly higher risk of developing bladder infections. To be safe, if your pet is to be treated with Apoquel® for many years, we recommend that once yearly your dog have a physical examination, a blood count, kidney/liver blood tests, and a urine test. These tests are an excellent idea as part of an annual wellness exam, and even more important for a pet taking any medication for a chronic skin disease.



**CALL US 24/7**

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