

Current Status of Colchicine

In October 2009, the FDA approved the first single-ingredient oral colchicine product, Colcrys®, for the treatment of Familial Mediterranean Fever (FMF) and acute gout flares. Oral colchicine has been used for centuries as an “unapproved” drug before the FDA even existed. Benjamin Franklin used colchicine for his gout! Since URL Pharma received FDA approval for its colchicine product Colcrys® the price for the colchicine product went from 44¢/tablet to \$5/tablet. The drug company and the FDA have been notified of the use of colchicine in Chinese Shar-Pei with Familial Shar-Pei Fever to prevent systemic reactive amyloidosis which occurs in 5% of FSF dogs. This means 25% of the Chinese Shar-Pei in the United States will be put at risk for developing amyloidosis resulting in death. Communication with URL Pharma has indicated their refusal to allow the owners of Chinese Shar-Pei to participate in their Colcrys Patient Assistance Program. Besides being a demonstration of capitalism at its worst, this leaves Shar-Pei owners with no options in the United States – “approved “colchicine is no good to anyone if it is unaffordable. The FDA has also responded to the situation by stating that it is a regulatory agency with no power to control pricing of pharmaceuticals. To that end I recommend that Shar-Pei owners ask their veterinarians for written prescriptions for colchicine and use those to obtain colchicine from Canadian (or other foreign) pharmacies at a reasonable price. Another avenue would be compounding pharmacies. I would also recommend that Shar-Pei owners consider a boycott of URL Pharma, Inc., URL Distribution, Mutual Pharmaceutical company, Inc. and AR Scientific, Inc.

Lastly I have included some pictures of the end result of URL Pharma’s policy governing the availability of colchicine to the Chinese Shar-Pei breed. I think it is important to show the suffering the FSF Chinese Shar-Pei dogs in kidney failure due to renal amyloidosis endure but also the anguish we as owners suffer as well as we try to deal with this unique breed problem.



I would also encourage members to E-mail Dr. Bernadette Dunham, Head of the Center for Veterinary Medicine at FDA Bernadette.Dunham@fda.hhs.gov, Dr. Janet Woodcock at the FDA Director, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research Janet.Woodcock@fda.hhs.gov and Dr. Margaret Hamburg at FDA Margaret.hamburg@fda.hhs.gov. Richard H. Roberts, MD, PhD is the President and Chief Executive Officer of URL Pharma and I would E-mail through Customer Service CustomerService@URLPharma.com.

Jeff Vidt, DVM (12/11/10)

References as to where you might be able to obtain Colchicine:

Notes from Jeanie Taber:

I have used these two Canadian pharmacies personally for my own med.s & find them very professional & easy to deal with. The prices for Colchicine are comparable to those in the US before the change. The same compound as far as I can tell.

www.universaldrugstore.com/medications/colchicine

www.canadadrugs.com/search.php?keyword=colchicine

www.alldaychemist.com/search.php?search_query=colchicine

I have also seen Dr. Tintle refer to this one: www.wedgewoodpetrx.com

Wedgewood Pharmacy

1-800-331-8282

405 Heron Drive

Suite 200

Swedesboro, NJ 08085

0.6 mg/ml - 30 mls - \$33.00 120 mls - \$60.00 for a 2 month supply or more for most dogs (plus shipping)

The process is simple & straight forward to use these pharmacies. Get a prescription from ones vet call the pharmacy, (800 #), register , arrange payment then Fax the prescription. Very easy!

There is always the compounding pharmacies in the US & they are equally good price wise tho' not all make the Colchicine so again one must call around. Here is a directory for accredited pharmacies however a search for 'compounding pharmacy' will yield many more. Pays to ask some questions as some of them are not accredited & not all prepare veterinary formulations.

<http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/apr09/090401q.asp>

Also, when buying Colchicine it is wise to ask about the form it is in from the compounding pharmacist. Some are now making it in a suspension (liquid) in a larger amount however it loses potency before it can be used completely per Skip at Skip's Compounding pharmacy.

HTH's

Notes from Alice Fix:

A Centennial Club member made these comments to pass along:

I finally received my package of meds from the Canadian Family Pharmacy. I would not give them a high score for delivery service, it took 23 days, but the order is accurate and their price on Colchicine is the best I have seen. The more you order, the lower the price. The web address is: www.canadianfamilypharmacy.net.

You place the order using a credit or debit card. It takes about 5-7 days to even process the order, then it goes into a shipping order and eventually ships out. I did not pay for the faster shipping so the whole process took almost 30 days. It will give you a customer support site to track your order and they are pretty quick about responding to questions and concerns about the order. I hope this helps!