Lactulose

Chromulac® and Cephulac® are other names for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?
- Lactulose is a medication that is used as a stool softener to treat constipation. Some cats with a condition called megacolon (flaccid intestines causing constipation) may need to receive lactulose for most of their lives.
- It can also be used in liver disease to help reduce ammonia that can build up in the blood.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?
- Lactulose is comprised of sugars and may cause problems in diabetic animals. You may need to alter your pet’s insulin dose when administering lactulose.
- As lactulose can cause diarrhea, it should be used very carefully in animals with fluid and electrolyte imbalances. If your pet shows signs of weakness, incoordination or irregular heartbeat, you should contact your veterinarian immediately. If your animal has any of the above conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks of using the medication versus the benefits that it might have.

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?
- Diarrhea is the most common side effect of lactulose. You should make sure your animal has plenty of clean water to drink while being treated with lactulose to prevent dehydration.
- Some animals will become gassy and experience stomach cramping.
- Cats dislike the taste of gassy and may be difficult to get them to accept this medication.

How Should It Be Given?
- Lactulose is usually given orally up to three times daily. It is a sticky, sweet oral liquid that may be difficult to get into cats. To treat constipation, it should be given until the pet produces 2-3 very soft stools daily. It can also be given as an enema for patients that are in a severe liver failure crisis.
- The successful outcome of your animal’s treatment with this medication depends upon your commitment and ability to administer it exactly as the veterinarian has prescribed. Please do not skip doses or stop giving the medication. If you have difficulty giving doses consult your veterinarian or pharmacist who can offer administration techniques or change the dosage form to a type of medication that may be more acceptable to you and your animal.
- If you miss a dose of this medication you should give it as soon as you remember it, but if it is within a few hours of the regularly scheduled dose, wait and give it at the regular time. Do not double a dose as this can be toxic to your pet.
- Some other drugs can interact with this medication so tell your veterinarian about any drugs or foods that you currently give your animal. Do not give new foods or medications without first asking your veterinarian.
- Dogs and Cats: Dogs and cats usually receive lactulose orally 2-4 times daily. Your veterinarian may also administer lactulose as an enema in the veterinary clinic, but this is generally not recommended to be performed at home.
- Horses: Horses may receive lactulose for liver failure and receive the drug orally up to three times daily.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?
- Lactulose should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.
- Refrigeration is not required and may make the drug too thick to remove from the medication container.