

Azaperone:

SCHEDULING STATUS: S5

CURRENTLY COMPOUNDED FORMULATIONS:

Active ingredient(s)	Injectable	Oral equine paste	Oral carnivore paste	Orals for exotics	Oral solution/suspension	Topical treatment	Shampoo	Capsules/Tablets	Oral powder
Azaperone	✓								

REGISTERED PRODUCT/ TRADE NAME: Stresnil® (discontinued)

PHARMACOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION: Butyrophenone tranquilizer

PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTION: Azaperone is a neuroleptic, exerting primarily an antidopaminergic effect. Tranquilization and sedation. Also has anti-emetic activity, reduced motor activity and inhibition of CNS catecholamines.

INDICATIONS: Used in wildlife for game capture purposes.

Azaperone is officially indicated for the control of aggressiveness when mixing or regrouping weanling or feeder pigs weighing up to 36.4 kg. It is also used clinically as a general tranquilizer for swine, to allow piglets to be accepted by aggressive sows, and as a preoperative agent prior to general anaesthesia or caesarean section with local anaesthesia. Azaperone has been used as a neuroleptic in horses, but some horses develop adverse reactions (sweating, muscle tremors, panic reaction, CNS excitement) and IV administration has resulted in significant arterial hypotension. Because of these effects, most clinicians avoid the use of this drug in equines.^[1]

Indicated for use in pigs for the following:^[2]

- Regrouping of weaners, porkers, baconers or adult pigs: prevention and treatment of fighting.
- Periparturient stress.
- Stress-induced tachycardia.
- Excitement.
- Premedication for local or general anaesthesia.
- Aggressive sows.
- Transportation of boars.

DOSAGE AND DIRECTIONS FOR USE:

WILDLIFE:

Azaperone is probably the tranquilizer of choice in most drug mixtures but has one disadvantage in that there is no antagonist that can be used to reverse its effects, particularly if given at high doses.^[3]

African Elephant: 20-300 mg
Black Rhino: 50-200 mg
Black Wildebeest: 20-40 mg
Blue Wildebeest: 30-60 mg
Bontebok/Blesbok: 10-40 mg
Cape Buffalo: 50-100 mg
Common Reedbuck: 10-20 mg

Eland: 50-150 mg
Gemsbok: 30-60 mg
Giraffe: 50-200 mg
Grey Duiker: 5-15 mg
Grey Rhebok: 5-15 mg
Impala: 10-30 mg
Klipspringer: 5-10 mg

Kudu: 50-150 mg
Mountain Reedbuck: 5-15 mg
Nyala: 30-50 mg
Red Hartebeest: 30-80 mg
Red Lechwe: 30-100 mg
Roan: 50-150 mg
Sable: 50-150 mg

Springbok: 10-30 mg
Steenbok: 5-10 mg
Suni: 2-5 mg
Tsessebe: 50-100 mg
Waterbuck: 50-100 mg
White Rhino: 50-400 mg
Zebra: 50-100 mg

SWINE:

Do not give IV, allow pigs to be undisturbed for 20 minutes after injecting.^[1]

The drug starts taking effect within minutes of administration. Peak effect is reached after 15 minutes in the young and 30 minutes in mature animals; effectiveness is maintained for one to six hours.^[2]

Low-level administration (0.5 mg/kg) induces slight sedation and the animal can still be driven.

At 2 mg/kg the animal is recumbent for approximately two hours, can hardly be driven and loses all aggressiveness. At higher dosage rates there is difficulty standing up and defensive mechanisms are considerably reduced; minor therapeutic procedures can be performed but there is no analgesia.^[2]

For approved indication of mixing feeder or weanling pigs:^[1]

- 2.2 mg/kg deeply IM

For labelled indications:^[1]

- Note: all doses are to be given IM directly behind the ear using a long hypodermic needle and given as closely behind the ear as possible and perpendicular to the skin.
 - o Aggression (prevention and cure of fighting; including regrouping of piglets, porkers, fattening pigs): 2 mg/kg
 - o Treatment of aggression in sows: 2 mg/kg
 - o Stress (restlessness, anxiety, etc.): 1-2 mg/kg
 - o Transport of boars: 1 mg/kg
 - o Transport of weaners: 0.4-2 mg/kg
 - o Obstetrics: 1 mg/kg
 - o As a premed: 1-2 mg/kg

WARNINGS/ PRECAUTIONS/ CONTRA-INDICATIONS:

- Dose of 1 mg/kg should not be exceeded in boars as the drug may cause the penis to be extruded.^[1]
- Side effects in pigs include transient salivation or panting; extrapyramidal effects; hypotension; respiratory stimulation.^[1]
- Avoid use in very cold conditions as cardiovascular collapse may occur secondary to peripheral vasodilation.^[1]
- Because Vietnamese Pot Bellied pigs may have delayed absorption due to sequestration of the drug in body fat, re-dose with extreme caution; deaths have resulted after repeat dosing.^[1]
- Side effects in wildlife include catalepsy. Increased aggression can be seen in some species, for example in gemsbok, especially towards people in a boma or truck.^[3]

REFERENCES:

1. Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook, Sixth edition by Donald C. Plumb
2. IDR, Volume 10 2009/2010
3. Chemical and Physical Restraint of Wild Animals, Second Edition, Edited by Michael D. Kock, and Richard Burroughs