

## USE OF ACP AS A TRANQUILIZER IN BOXER DOGS

An owner of a FBCSA registered Boxer almost lost her Boxer when a vet used ACP as a sedative during minor surgery. The article below is an explanation from Dr Gareth Zeiler as to why ACP should **never** be used on Boxers as well as an article found on the Queensland Boxer Club website. Take some time to read this and be aware of it if you are tranquilizing your Boxer for a flight or for nervous dogs during a storm.

It is common knowledge that Boxers are highly sensitive to ACP. ACP is a good pre-medication used in some surgeries; however it should **NEVER** be used on Boxer dogs because they suffer from extreme hypotension.

There are many safe tranquilizers on the market that can be used on Boxers and your vet should be aware of these. If ACP is given to a Boxer it should be around a 1/4 of the calculated dose, but rather use something like Xylavet to pre-med.

Alzam is a very good anxiolytic for nervous Boxers during storms and other phobias. As far as air travel goes, I say you should never tranquilize the dog or cat. The bay that they are kept in, is air conditioned and if the animal is very sedated they can lose a lot of body heat and suffer from an icy trip. Also the action of the drug is short so the drugs are not much help, even in a 2 hour flight. Most dogs accept their travel very well without too much fuss. If owners really need to give something to their dogs, rather choose a Herbal remedy that can be bought from the vet.  
Dr Gareth Zeiler

Taken From Queensland Boxer Club [www.qldboxerclub.org](http://www.qldboxerclub.org).

### ACEPROMAZINE (ACP) WARNING

There is one drug used in anaesthetic protocols that should not be used in the Boxer. That drug is Acepromazine, a tranquilliser that is often used as a pre-anesthetic agent. In the Boxer it tends to cause a problem called first degree heart block, a potentially serious arrhythmia of the heart. It also causes a profound hypotension (severe lowering of the blood pressure) in many Boxers that are given the drug.

Recently on the Veterinary Information Network, a computer network for practicing veterinarians, an announcement was placed in the cardiology section entitled "Acepromazine and Boxers." This described several adverse reactions to the drug in a very short time span at a Veterinary Teaching Hospital. All the adverse reactions were in Boxers. The reactions included collapse, respiratory arrest and profound bradycardia (slow heart rate, less than 60 beats per minute). The announcement suggested that acepromazine should not be used in dogs of the Boxer breed because of breed related sensitivity to the drug.

#### WARNING:

This drug is the most commonly prescribed tranquillizer in veterinary medicine. It is also used orally and is prescribed for owners who want to tranquillise their dogs for air travel. I would strongly recommend that Boxer owners avoid the use of this drug, especially when the dog will be unattended and/or unable to receive emergency medical care if it is needed.