

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

ANTIDIARRHOEALS

ABOUT your medicine

Antidiarrhoeals are medicines taken to manage diarrhoea and relieve symptoms.

There are several different types of antidiarrhoeals and they work in different ways. Since directions for use are different for each type, it is important to know which one you are taking. The different types of antidiarrhoeals include:

Types of Antidiarrhoeals	Examples	Mode of action
Adsorbent	Activated Charcoal (Ultracarbon) Kaolin (Kaopectate) Ispaghula husk (Mucofalk)	It works by adsorbing toxic substances or irritants in the intestines.
Antiperistaltic	Diphenoxylate with Atropine (Lomotil) Loperamide (Imodium)	It helps to stop diarrhoea by slowing down the movements of the intestines.
Fluid & Electrolyte Replacement	Oral Rehydration Salts (Servidrat®)	It replaces the water and some important salts that are lost from the body during diarrhoea.

Digestive Enzymes	Lactobacillus (Lacteol Fort®) Lipase (Enzyplex®)	It helps to normalize the intestinal flora by suppressing the growth of harmful microorganisms
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HOW should I take the medicine?

For safe and effective use of your antidiarrhoeal:

- Follow your doctor's instruction if any of the above antidiarrhoeals was prescribed.
- Follow the manufacturer's package direction or ask your pharmacist if you are treating yourself.

Contact your doctor if you have a fever or if there is blood or mucus in your stools.

For patients taking *adsorbent* antidiarrhoeals:

- Milk, ice-cream and sherbet should be avoided since they can reduce the effectiveness of charcoal
- Do not take any medicine within 2 hours of the activated charcoal. Taking other medicine together with activated charcoal may prevent the other medicine from being absorbed by the body
- In addition to using medicine for diarrhoea, it is very important that the fluid lost by the body is replaced and a proper diet is followed
- For the first 24 hours, drink plenty of caffeine-free clear liquids. During the next 24 hours, bland food such as porridge, bread, cooked cereal and crackers may be taken.

For patients taking *antiperistaltic* antidiarrhoeal:

- The medicine may be taken with food if it causes stomach upset when taken before meals
- In addition to using medicine for diarrhoea, it is very important that the fluid lost by the body is replaced and a proper diet is followed.
- For the first 24 hours, drink plenty of caffeine-free clear liquids. During the next 24 hours, bland food such as porridge, bread, cooked cereal and crackers may be taken.

For patients taking *oral rehydration salts*:

- Dissolve the powder/ tablet in boiled cool water
- Do not boil the solution
- Make and use fresh solutions each day. Discard unused solution at the end of each day.
- Babies and small children should be given the solution slowly, in small amounts, as often as possible during the first 24 hours of diarrhoea.

For patients taking *digestive enzymes*:

- Granules may be added to or given with cereal, food, juices or water
- In addition to using the medicine for diarrhoea, it is very important that the fluid lost by the body is replaced and a proper diet is followed.
- For the first 24 hours, drink plenty of caffeine-free clear liquids. During the next 24 hours, bland food such as porridge, bread, cooked cereal and crackers may be taken.

What should I do if **I FORGET** a dose?

If you are taking this medicine on a regular schedule and you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take double dose to make up for a missed dose.

What are the possible **SIDE-EFFECTS** of the medicine?

Along with its needed effects, a medicine may cause some unwanted effects. These side-effects may go away during treatment as your body adjusts to the medicine. However, check with your doctor if any of the following side-effects continue or are bothersome:

Type of medicine	Side effects
Adsorbent	Vomiting, constipation, black stool (if charcoal is taken)
Antiperistaltics	Drowsiness, dry mouth, dizziness, fatigue
Oral rehydration salts	Vomiting
Digestive enzymes	Flatulence

Consult your doctor if you experience any unusual side-effects when taking your medication especially:

For antiperistaltics:

Blurred vision, shortness of breath or troubled breathing, unusual excitement, flushing of the skin, severe constipation with bloating, decreased or no urine for more than 8 hours.

For oral rehydration salts:

Puffy eyelids, convulsion, fast heartbeat, swelling of feet or lower legs, weakness, high blood pressure.

What **PRECAUTIONS** should I take?

Before taking the medicine,

- Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to any drugs
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist what medications you are taking, especially antibiotics, antacids, pain or seizure medicine, heart disease or blood pressure medicine and vitamins.
- Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had diabetes, heart diseases, high blood pressure or intestinal diseases.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.

Antidiarrhoeals should not be used for more than 2 days, unless directed by your doctor. If you are required to take the medicine regularly for some time, your doctor would check your progress at regular visits.

Check with your doctor if your diarrhoea does not stop after two days or if you develop a fever or blood/mucus is found in the stool. For infants and small children, consult your doctor or pharmacist regarding the treatment of diarrhoea.

Antiperistaltic medications may cause drowsiness. Make sure you know how your body reacts to this medicine before you drive, use machinery or do anything else that could be dangerous when an individual is not alert and is in a drowsy/dizzy state.

How should I **STORE** the medicine?

Keep the medication in an airtight container. Store away from heat and direct sunlight.