

### What PRECAUTIONS should I take?

Before taking the medicine,

- Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to any medicines.
- Tell your doctor or pharmacist what other medicines 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 disease, high blood pressure, renal disease or intestinal disease.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.

Laxatives are overused by many people. Such a practice often leads to dependence on them to produce a bowel movement. In severe cases, overuse of some laxatives may cause damage to the nerves, muscles and tissues of the intestines and bowel. If you have any questions about the use of laxatives, check with your healthcare professional.

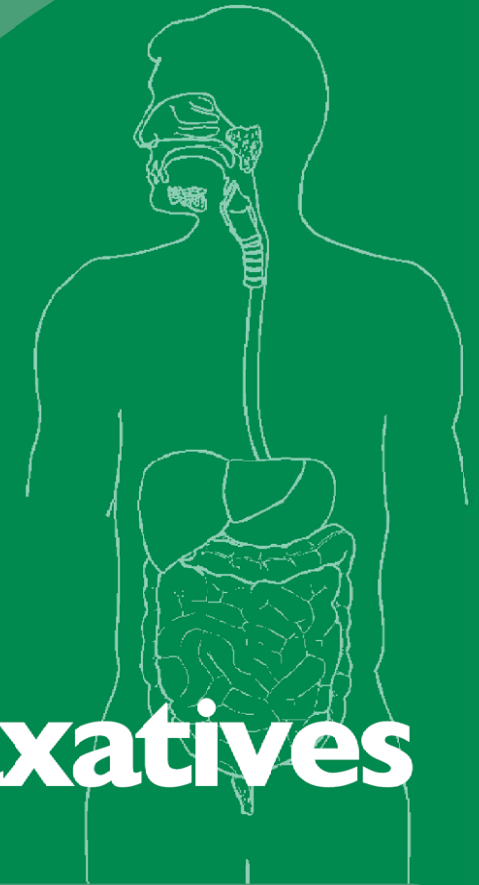
### How should I STORE the medicine?

Store the medicine in a cool, dry place. Keep away from heat and direct sunlight.



Discard all medication that has expired or is no longer required

# Patient Information Leaflet



# Laxatives

E50R0

Keep all medication out of reach of children

## ABOUT your medicine

Laxatives are medicines taken to promote bowel movement and relieve constipation.

There are several different types of laxatives 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 laxatives are:

Type of Laxatives	Examples	Mode of Action
Bulk former - comes in oral powder form	Ispaghula husk (Fybogel®) Psyllium hydrophilic mucilloid (Metamucil®) Sterculia (Nomacol®)	It works by absorbing the liquid in the intestine and swells to form a soft, bulky stool. The bowel is then stimulated by the presence of the bulky mass.
Stimulant -comes in oral tablet form (for bisacodyl, the suppository form is also available)	Bisacodyl (Dulcolax®) Senna (Senokot®)	It encourages bowel movement by acting on the intestinal wall. It increases muscle contraction and this moves the stool mass towards the rectum.
Stool softener - comes in oral liquid form or enema	Liquid Paraffin Liquid Paraffin Emulsion Olive Oil Enema	It works by coating and softening the faeces. The stool remains soft and the passage is made easier.
Osmotic	Glycerol (suppository) <i>Lactulose type</i> Lactulose (Duphalac®) (oral liquid) <i>Saline type</i> Polyethylene Glycol (Klean-Prep®) (oral) Magnesium Sulphate Sodium phosphate (Fleet® Phospho-Soda) (oral or enema)	It encourages bowel movement by drawing water into the bowel from surrounding body tissues. This provides a soft stool mass and increased bowel action

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## HOW should I take/use the medicine?

Follow your doctor's instruction. Along with the use of the laxatives, drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water each day. This will help to soften the stool.

For patients taking *bulk forming* laxatives:

- Mix the dry powder in a glass of liquid and drink immediately.
- To allow the bulk-forming laxatives to work properly and to prevent intestinal blockage, it is necessary to drink plenty of fluids during their use. Each dose should be taken in with a full glass or more of cold water or fruit juice. This will provide enough liquid for the laxative to work properly.
- When taking the bulk former, results often may be obtained as early as 12 hours or as late as 2 or 3 days.

For patients taking *stimulant* laxatives:

- Stimulant laxatives are usually taken on an empty stomach for rapid effect. Results are slowed if taken with food.
- Many stimulant laxatives are often taken at bedtime to produce results the next morning (although some may require 24 hours or more).

Bisacodyl tablets are specially coated to allow them to work properly without causing gastric irritation and/or nausea. Do not chew, crush or take the tablet within an hour of milk or antacids.

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For patients taking stool *softener* laxatives:

- The medicine should not be taken within 2 hours of meals because of possible interference with food digestion and absorption.
- It is usually taken at bedtime for convenience as it requires about 6 to 8 hours to produce results.

For patients taking *osmotic* laxatives:

- The unpleasant taste produced by some of these laxatives may be improved by drinking citrus fruit juices or citrus-flavored carbonated beverages.
- Lactulose may not produce laxative results for 24 to 48 hours.
- Saline laxatives usually produce results within 1/2 to 3 hours following a dose.

For patients using the suppository form of osmotic laxative:

- If the suppository is too soft to insert, chill the suppository in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes or run cold water over it before you remove the foil wrapper.
- Results may be obtained within 15 minutes to 1 hour.

For patients using the enema or rectal form of this medicine:

- Read the instructions for patients carefully before using it.

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

The medicine may cause some side-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:

Types of Laxatives	Side-effects
Bulk former	Flatulence, abdominal distension
Stimulant laxative	Abdominal cramp, diarrhoea, nausea, belching
Stool softener	Anal seepage of paraffin, anal irritation after prolonged use
Osmotic laxative	Cramping, diarrhoea, gas, increased thirst

Consult your doctor if you experience any of the following side-effects or other unusual side-effects when taking/using your medicine:

*For bulk forming laxative:*

- Difficulties in breathing/swallowing
- Skin rash/itch

*For osmotic/stimulant laxative:*

- Confusion, irregular heart beat, muscle cramps
- Unusual tiredness or weakness
- Bloody stools, rectal bleeding

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