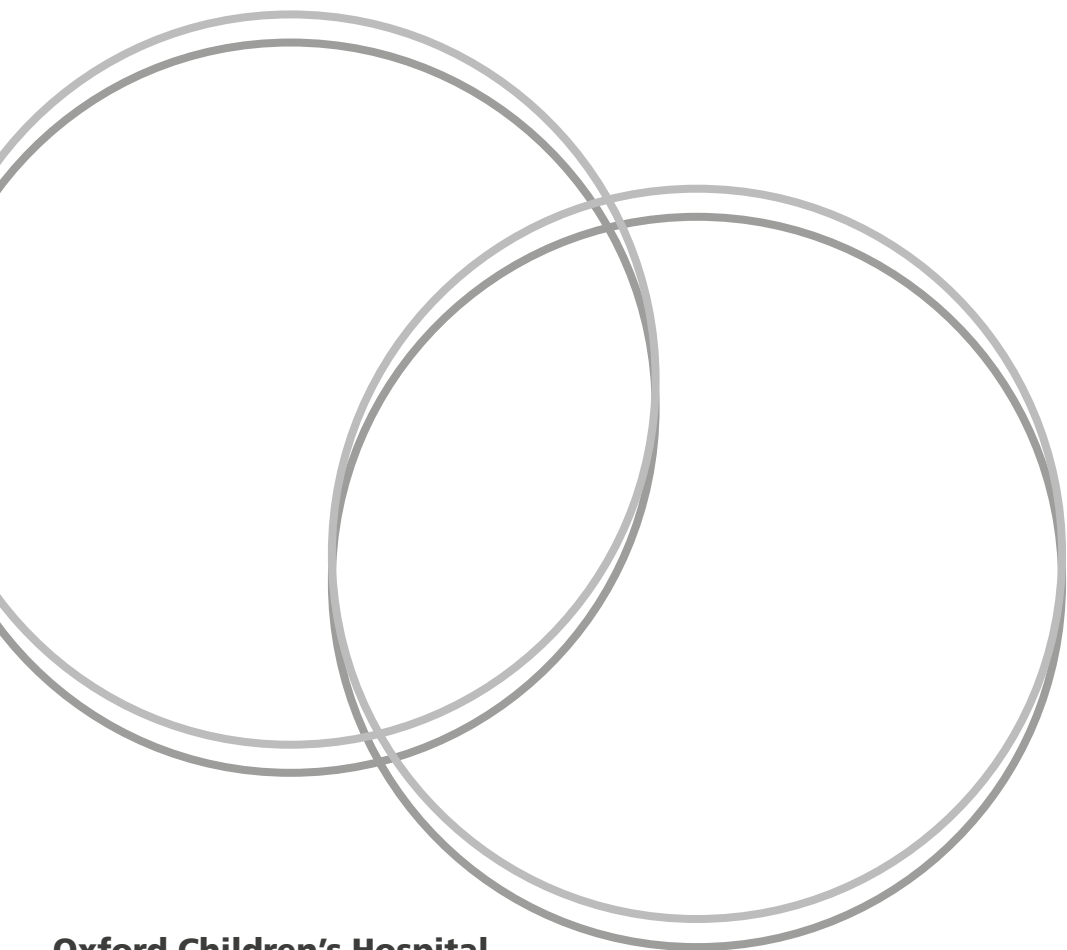


Medicines: Mesalazine

(Pentasa[®], Asacol[®], Salofalk[®])

Information for parents and carers



This information leaflet answers common questions parents or patients ask about their medicine. Further information can be found in the information leaflet supplied by the manufacturer, or ask your pharmacist or doctor.

Why have I been started on this medicine?

Mesalazine has a major role in maintaining remission of ulcerative colitis. Crohn's disease may also benefit from treatment with Mesalazine and it is often used to help reduce the chances of Crohn's disease recurring after operations.

You should not interchange different brands of Mesalazine, unless instructed by your doctor.

How does it work?

Mesalazine belongs to a group of medicines called aminosalicylates or 5-ASA drugs. They act on the inflamed lining of the gut (intestine) to prevent the formation of substances that cause inflammation. Each aminosalicylate formulation releases active drug in different parts of the intestine. Therefore different preparations of aminosalicylates are used depending on the pattern of inflammation.

How long does it take to work?

Mesalazine will start working straight away but may take a week or so for your child's symptoms to improve. In order to remain in remission, you must continue to take it even if you feel well. Mesalazine is sometimes used to treat a mild attack, and is most effective for limited colitis when given as a suppository or enema.

What dose do I take?

Higher doses are used in acute attacks and lower doses are used to maintain remission. Most patients take 1 to 3g per day.

How do I take it?

Each brand of Mesalazine comes in different strength enemas or suppositories.

There are different brands and preparations which work in different areas in the intestine.

How long will I be taking it?

If tolerated, you will probably remain on Mesalazine indefinitely while your disease remains in remission. Do not stop taking your medicine unless your doctor tells you to, even if you feel well.

What are the side effects?

The most common side effect of Mesalazine is headache, and this is the main reason why some patients cannot take the drug. Also common are indigestion, nausea and watery diarrhoea, as well as mild allergic reactions such as rash, itchiness and fever. Generally however, Mesalazine is very well tolerated and most patients experience no side effects.

Very rarely, these drugs can affect the liver, lungs, pancreas, kidneys and production of blood cells in the bone marrow (causing bleeding, bruising, sore throat, fever, malaise).

Do I need blood tests?

Mesalazine has very occasionally been reported to cause blood disorders. We suggest that a blood count, electrolytes, urea, creatinine & liver function tests are done every 3 months for the first year and every 6 months thereafter.

What do I do if I experience side effects?

If you experience any signs of illness or side effects such as unexplained bruising, bleeding (e.g. nosebleeds or spots under your skin), sore throat, fever or malaise, contact your doctor immediately.

What happens if I forget to take a dose?

If you forget to take a dose at the right time, take it as soon as you remember. Then go on as before, but do not take two doses within one hour or so of each other. If you take too much Mesalazine, tell your doctor immediately.

If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose, then repeat the dose. If it is over 30 minutes do not repeat and wait until next dose is due.

Does Mesalazine interfere with my other medicines?

Most other drugs can be taken safely, however always check with your doctor or pharmacist first. Always inform your doctor if you started new medication.

It is safe to drink alcohol in moderation while you are on Mesalazine, but it may aggravate any nausea.

How to give feedback about your experience?

We would like to hear about your experience with our Childrens' Services. Please ask for a paper survey to fill in.

How to contact us

If you have any questions you may contact the
Paediatric Gastroenterology Specialist Nurses:

Telephone: **01865 234 002** for queries.

Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.

Never give any medication prescribed for you to anyone else. It may harm them even if their symptoms are the same as you.

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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