

Bisacodyl

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

Bisacodyl is used to treat constipation. It is available in both tablets and suppositories forms.

It may also be used to empty the colon before an X-ray examination of the abdomen (including stomach and intestines) or endoscopy (where a camera is used to examine the digestive tract) and before surgery.

- Tablets may take up to 12 hours to work.
- Suppositories usually work within 15 minutes to an hour.

How should I take/use this medication?

- For tablet: Take your medication as instructed by your healthcare professional. Do not chew or crush the tablet and swallow it whole. Do not take within one hour after taking an antacid, milk or any dairy products.
- For suppository: Use your medication as instructed by your healthcare professional. It should only be inserted into the anus.

This medication should only be used for a short period of time. Check with your healthcare professional if your constipation does not go away.

What should I do if I forget to take/use this medication?

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Skip the dose if it is too near to your next dose. Then take your next dose at the usual time. Do not take two doses to make up for the missed dose.

What precautions should I take?

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You are allergic to this medication or any of the other ingredients of this medication
- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding
- You are taking any other medications, including supplements, traditional medications and herbal remedies.
- You are on a galactose or lactose free diet. This preparation contains both lactose and galactose.
- You have or had history of bowel obstruction (blockage in the small or large intestine)

What are some common side-effects of this medication?

- Common side effects of bisacodyl include cramps, nausea and vomiting.
- For suppository: Bisacodyl suppository may cause some irritation to the anus.

Consult your healthcare professional if the symptoms do not go away or become bothersome.

What are some rare but serious side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?

Consult your healthcare professional if you have sudden severe stomach pain, bleeding from the anus or blood in your stool or vomit.

The symptoms of a drug allergy include one or more of the following:

- Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
- Difficulty in breathing
- Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should stop your medication and see your healthcare professional immediately.

What food or medication should I avoid when I take this medication?

Bisacodyl can generally be taken with most other food or medicines. Space apart antacid, milk and dairy products by at least one hour if you are using bisacodyl tablets.

Inform your healthcare professional if you are taking or intend to take any other medication, supplements, traditional medications or herbal remedies.

How should I store this medication?

For tablet: Store in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight. Keep this medication away from children.

For suppository: Store in the refrigerator. Do not freeze.

How should I throw away this medication safely?

Pack this medication into a black trash bag and seal it tightly before throwing into the rubbish chute or bin.

Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore.

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