PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Sodium Phosphates

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Fleet Enema Extra [OTC]; Fleet Enema [OTC]; Fleet Pedia-Lax Enema [OTC]; GoodSense Enema [OTC]; LaCrosse Complete [OTC]; OsmoPrep [DSC]; We Care Enema [OTC]

Brand Names: Canada

Fleet Enema

Warning

Tablets:

- Rarely, severe kidney problems have happened in people taking drugs with sodium phosphate by mouth before a bowel exam. Sometimes, this has been long-lasting and some people have needed long-term dialysis. Most of the time, these kidney problems happened within a few days. Sometimes, kidney problems happened several months after taking this drug. Kidney problems can happen in anyone taking this drug but the chance of kidney problems is higher in older people or people with low blood volume, slow movement through the bowels, bowel block, colitis, or kidney disease. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- The chance of kidney problems may be higher if you are taking any drugs that can affect kidney function. There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- Follow how to take this drug as you have been told by your doctor. Do not use more than you were told to use.
- Drink lots of noncaffeine liquids before, during, and after using this drug unless you are told to drink less liquid by your doctor.
- Do not take with any other products that have sodium phosphate in them. This includes some enemas.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat constipation.
- It is used to clean out the GI (gastrointestinal) tract.
- It is used to treat or prevent low phosphate levels.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

All products:

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have heart failure (weak heart).
- If you have ever had kidney problems.
- If you are using another drug that has the same drug in it.

Tablets and rectal enema:

- If you have any of these health problems: Bowel block, hole in the bowel, or other stomach or bowel problems; electrolyte (like sodium, potassium, phosphate) problems; fluid loss (dehydrated); or had stomach or bowel surgery.

Tablets:

- If you have taken this drug within the past 7 days.

Rectal enema:

- If you have any of these health problems: Bowel block, belly pain, upset stomach, rectal bleeding, throwing up, or change in bowel habits lasting longer than 2 weeks.

Injection:

- If you have high phosphate levels, low calcium levels, or high sodium levels.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking

with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If you are on a low-sodium or sodium-free diet, talk with your doctor. Some of these products have sodium.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Different forms of this drug may be for use in different ages of children. Talk with the doctor before giving this drug to a child.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

Tablets and rectal enema:

- Do not use other laxatives or stool softeners unless told to do so by the doctor.
- Talk with your doctor about drinking lots of fluids and other ways to prevent fluid loss. If you have a lot of fluid loss, you may have more side effects from this drug.
- Tell your doctor if you have fluid loss, unusual sweating, throwing up, diarrhea, decreased appetite, or unusual thirst.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.

Rectal enema:

- If you have rectal bleeding or you do not have a bowel movement after using this drug, talk with your doctor.
- Very bad kidney and heart problems have rarely happened in people using

these products to treat constipation. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Most of the time, this happened when people used more of this drug than they were told. Do not use more than 1 dose of this drug in 24 hours. If you do not pass a stool after a dose of this drug, do not use another product that has sodium phosphate in it within 24 hours. Call your doctor to find out what to do.

- This drug may cause harm if swallowed. If this drug is swallowed, call a doctor or poison control center right away.

Injection:

- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may contain aluminum. There is a chance of aluminum toxicity if you are on this drug for a long time. The risk is greater if you have kidney problems. The risk is also higher in premature infants. Talk with the doctor.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

All products:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of fluid and electrolyte problems like mood changes, confusion, muscle pain or weakness, fast or abnormal heartbeat, severe dizziness or passing out, increased thirst, seizures, feeling very tired or weak, decreased appetite, unable to pass urine or change in the amount of urine produced, dry mouth, dry eyes, or severe upset stomach or throwing up.

- Chest pain or pressure.

Tablets and rectal enema:

- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Very bad belly cramping or bloating.
- Severe stomach pain.
- Very bad headache.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Bleeding from rectum or rectal pain.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

Tablets and rectal enema:

- Stomach pain.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Bloating.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

Tablets:

- Take this drug as your doctor has told you. Follow all instructions you have been given closely. This includes when to take this drug, foods and drinks to avoid before the exam, and when to stop eating and drinking before the exam. Talk with your doctor if you have any questions.
- Drink clear liquids before, during, and after taking this drug. Do not drink any liquids that are purple or red. Do not drink milk or alcohol.
- Drink lots of noncaffeine liquids before, during, and after using this drug unless you are told to drink less liquid by your doctor.
- Do not eat solid food or drink dairy products like milk while taking this drug.
- Do not take other drugs by mouth within 1 hour before or 1 hour after you start taking each dose of this drug.

Rectal enema:

- Use enema rectally.
- Take off cap.
- Put enema tip into the rectum with gentle pressure. Do not force.
- Do not take other drugs within 2 hours of this drug.

Injection:

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

Rectal enema:

- This drug is taken on an as needed basis. Do not take more often than told by the doctor.

Rectal and bowel exams:

- If you are using this drug before an exam, take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.

Injection:

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

Tablets and rectal enema:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Injection:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All products:

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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