Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Sodium Picosulfate, Magnesium Oxide, and Citric Acid

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

Clenpiq

Brand Names: Canada

Oral Purgative; Pico-Salax; Picodan; Picoflo; Purg-Odan

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to clean out the GI (gastrointestinal) tract.

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

- 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 any of these health problems: Bowel block, enlarged colon, hole in the GI (gastrointestinal) tract, or slow-moving GI (gastrointestinal) tract.
- If you have kidney disease.
- If you are dehydrated or have electrolyte problems.
- If you are taking other laxatives.

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?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If you have a risk for abnormal heartbeat, talk with your doctor. Your doctor may order an ECG before and after using this drug.
- Do not use other laxatives or stool softeners unless told to do so by the doctor.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- Some patients have become dehydrated and passed out while taking this drug. Passing out can cause falling and serious injuries (like head injury or broken bones). Be sure you drink enough clear liquids while taking this drug. Rise slowly if you have been sitting or lying down. Be careful going up and down stairs.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- 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.

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:

- 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.
- Bloating.
- Swelling of belly.
- Stomach cramps.
- Throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Bleeding from rectum or rectal pain.
- Trouble swallowing.
- This drug may cause you to be dehydrated or have electrolyte problems. Rarely, this may be severe or deadly. Tell your doctor right away if you get dizzy, pass out, feel tired or weak, or are unable to pass urine. Tell your doctor right away if you have a fast or abnormal heartbeat, seizures, headache, mood changes, confusion, muscle pain or weakness, increased thirst, decreased appetite, dry mouth or eyes, severe upset stomach or throwing up, or a change in the amount of urine produced.

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:

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

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.

All products:

- 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.
- Do not eat solid food or drink dairy products like milk while taking this drug.
- Drink extra liquids after each dose of this drug. Be sure you know how much liquid your doctor wants you to drink after each dose.
- Drink several types of clear liquids before, during, and after taking this drug. Do not drink only plain water. Be sure 1 other type of clear liquid is an electrolyte solution like a sports drink. Other clear liquids are black coffee or tea (no milk or creamer), clear broth or bullion, clear juice without pulp, ginger ale, other soda, plain jello, and frozen juice bars.
- Do NOT drink any liquids, jello, or juice bars that are purple or red. Do not drink milk or alcohol.
- Stop drinking liquids at least 2 hours before your exam unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- If you have very bad belly pain, swelling, or bloating after the first dose, do not take the second dose until they go away. Talk with your doctor.
- Do not take other drugs by mouth within 1 hour before each dose of this drug. Some drugs may need to be separated before and after each dose of this drug by a longer time. Talk with your doctor about how to take your

other drugs with this drug.

Powder for solution:

- Mix with water as told before you take this drug. Do not swallow the dry powder.
- After mixing, take your dose right away. Do not store for future use.
- Do not add ice to the mixed solution.

Liquid (solution):

- This drug is ready to drink. You do not need to dilute this drug before you take it.
- The solution is clear and you may be able to see some particles in it. This is normal.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.
- Call your doctor if you are not able to finish this drug before your exam.

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

Powder for solution:

- Store at room temperature.
- After mixing, do not refrigerate.

Liquid (solution):

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.

All products:

- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- 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.
- This drug comes with an extra patient fact sheet called a Medication Guide. Read it with care. Read it again each time this drug is refilled. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with the doctor, 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.

Last Reviewed Date

2025-03-05

Copyright

© 2026 UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

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.

Sodium Picosulfate, Magnesium Oxide, and Citric Acid - Last updated on December 12, 2022
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center