



---

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Magnesium Sulfate

This information from Lexicomp® 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

Epsom Salt [OTC]; GoodSense Epsom Salt [OTC]

## What is this drug used for?

### Injection:

- It is used to treat or prevent low magnesium levels.

### Granules used by mouth:

- It is used to treat constipation.

### Granules used as soaks:

- It is used to treat minor sprains or bruises.

### All products:

- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

## What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

### All products:

- If your child has an allergy to this drug or any part of this drug.
- If your child is allergic to any drugs like this one or any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough;

swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

**Injection:**

- If your child has heart block.
- If your child has heart problems.

**Granules used by mouth:**

- If your child has 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.

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

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

**What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?**

**All products:**

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If your child is on a low-magnesium diet, talk with the doctor.

**If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:**

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

**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 your child is on this drug for a long time. The risk is greater if your child has kidney problems. The risk is also higher in premature infants. Talk with the doctor.

### **Granules used by mouth:**

- Try to space other drugs from this one by 2 hours. This drug stops many drugs from getting into the body.
- Do not give this drug for more than 1 week unless told to do so by your child's doctor.
- If your child has rectal bleeding or does not have a bowel movement after using this drug, talk with your child's doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before you give this drug to a child younger than 6 years old.

### **What are some side effects that I need to call my child's 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 child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has 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.

### **Injection:**

- Signs of high magnesium levels like change in thinking clearly and with logic, feeling sluggish, slow movements, shortness of breath, upset stomach, or very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Signs of low calcium levels like muscle cramps or spasms, numbness and tingling, or seizures.

- Flushing.
- Not able to move.
- Feeling cold.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Sweating a lot.

### **Granules used by mouth:**

- Severe diarrhea.
- Very upset stomach or throwing up.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Cramps.

## **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 child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

### **Granules used by mouth:**

- Diarrhea.
- Upset stomach.

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

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

## **How is this drug best given?**

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

### **Injection:**

- It is given as a shot into a muscle or vein.

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

### **Granules used by mouth:**

- Read package labeling carefully.
- Mix in 8 ounces (240 mL) of water.
- Lemon juice may be added to make it taste better.
- Give this drug with a full glass of water.

### **Granules used as soaks:**

- Mix with water as you have been told before using this drug.
- Have your child soak for as long as you were told by the doctor, then pat your child dry.

## **What do I do if my child misses a dose?**

### **Granules:**

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

### **Injection:**

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

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

### **Granules:**

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

### **Injection:**

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's 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 child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Keep a list of all your child's drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your child's doctor.
- Talk with your child's doctor before giving your child any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's 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 information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare

provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

## Last Reviewed Date

2018-10-12

## Copyright

© 2019 Wolters Kluwer Clinical Drug Information, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

---

Magnesium Sulfate - Last updated on October 18, 2019

©2019 Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center