Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Sodium Sulfate, Magnesium Sulfate, and Potassium Chloride

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

Sutab

## 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 electrolyte (like sodium, potassium, phosphate) problems.
- If you are taking any of the following: Bisacodyl or sodium picosulfate.

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.
- Do not use other laxatives or stool softeners unless told to do so by the doctor.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- 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.
- Some types of bowel problems have happened with this drug. This includes ulcers in the bowel and ischemic colitis. Sometimes, these have led to the need to go to the hospital. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- 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.

- Swelling of belly.
- Throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Bleeding from rectum or rectal pain.
- 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:

- Stomach pain.
- Throwing up.
- Upset stomach, bloating, and stomach cramps are common with this drug. Be sure you know what to do if these happen.

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.

- 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.
- On the day before your procedure, you can eat a low-residue breakfast as you were told by your doctor. Low-residue foods includes eggs; white bread, biscuits, or muffins (no wheat); cornflakes; cottage cheese; yogurt; cream of wheat; grits; fruit with no skin or seeds; coffee; and tea. Ask your doctor for a list of foods you can eat.
- After breakfast, you can only have clear liquids until after your procedure. Drink clear liquids before, during, and after taking this drug. Examples of clear liquids are coffee or tea (no milk or creamer), fruit juices (no pulp), gelatin desserts (no fruit or topping), water, chicken broth, or clear soda (like ginger ale).
- Do not eat solid food or drink dairy products like milk. Do not drink alcohol. Do not drink any liquids that are purple or red.
- Swallow 1 tablet at a time with a sip of water. After you take the full dose, drink an extra 32 ounces (946 mL) of water as you have been told by your doctor. If you become uncomfortable, take the tablets and water slower.
- 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.

## What do I do if I miss a dose?

- If you miss a dose or if you are not able to take a dose, call your doctor to find out what to do.

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

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Each bottle of this drug has a desiccant in it to keep the drug dry. Do not eat or swallow the desiccant. Take it out and throw it away.
- 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.

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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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