PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Docusate

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

Colace [OTC]; Docu Liquid [OTC] [DSC]; Docu [OTC] [DSC]; Docusate Mini [OTC]; DocuSol Kids [OTC] [DSC]; DocuSol Mini [OTC] [DSC]; DOK [OTC]; Dulcolax Stool Softener [OTC]; Enemeez Kids [OTC]; Enemeez Mini [OTC]; Fleet Stool Softener [OTC]; FT Stool Softener [OTC]; GoodSense Stool Softener [OTC]; Healthy Mama Move It Along [OTC]; OneLAX Docusate Sodium [OTC] [DSC]; Pedia-Lax [OTC]; Prolaxa [OTC]; Stool Softener [OTC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat constipation.

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

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- 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.
- If your child is taking mineral oil.

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 to give this drug with all of your child's other 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?

- 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.

- Do not give this drug for more than 1 week unless told to do so by your child's doctor.
- Do not give other laxatives or stool softeners 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.
- If your child is on a low-sodium or sodium-free diet, talk with the doctor. Some of these products have sodium.

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.

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.

Rectal enema:

- Rectal irritation.

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:

All oral products:

- Stomach cramps.
- Diarrhea.

Liquid:

- Throat irritation.

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.

All oral products:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Give this drug with a full glass of water.

Liquid:

- Mix liquid with milk, juice, or formula as you have been told to prevent throat irritation or cover the bitter taste.
- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.
- Some of these drugs need to be shaken before use. Be sure you know if this product needs to be shaken before using it.

Rectal enema:

- This drug is for rectal use only. Do not give this drug by mouth.
- Take off cap.
- Put a lubricant on the enema tip and on the anus before using this drug.
- Put enema tip into the rectum with gentle pressure. Do not force.
- Squeeze the bottle until almost all the liquid is gone.
- If the tip of the tube or this drug will not go into the rectum, do not force it. Call the doctor.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- If your child takes this drug on a regular basis, give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.
- Many times this drug is given on an as needed basis. Do not give to your child more often than told by the doctor.

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

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