PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Mesalamine

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

Apriso; Asacol HD [DSC]; Canasa; Delzicol [DSC]; Lialda; Pentasa; Rowasa; SfRowasa [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

Mezavant; Mezera; Octasa; Pentasa; Salofalk; TEVA-5 ASA; ZDS-Mesalamine

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat ulcerative colitis.
- It is used to help keep ulcerative colitis flares from coming back.
- It is used to treat mild to moderate disease at the far end of the colon.
- 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?

- 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: Kidney disease or liver disease.
- If your child has a stomach or bowel ulcer.

- If your child has a narrowing of the stomach valve or other type of stomach block.
- If your child has a urinary tract blockage, talk with healthcare provider.

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?

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.
- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.
- Have your child drink lots of noncaffeine liquids unless told to drink less liquid by your child's doctor.
- If your child is allergic to sulfites, talk with your child's doctor. Some products have sulfites in them.
- If your child has phenylketonuria (PKU), talk with your child's doctor. Some products have phenylalanine.
- While taking this drug, your child's urine may turn reddish-brown when it comes in contact with surfaces or water that have been treated with bleach (like in the toilet). If your child notices their urine is reddish-brown, watch their urine flow. Call the doctor only if your child's urine is reddish-brown when it leaves the body, before it comes into contact with any surfaces or

water that may have been treated with bleach.

- Your child may get sunburned more easily. Avoid lots of sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and dress your child in clothing and eyewear that protects from the sun.
- Not all products are meant for use in all children. Talk with the doctor before giving this drug to a child.
- Do not give to children and teenagers who have or are getting better from flu signs, chickenpox, or other viral infections due to the chance of Reye's syndrome. Reye's syndrome causes very bad problems to the brain and liver.

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.

Tablets:

- You may see parts of this drug in your child's stool. If this happens a lot, talk with the doctor.

Long-acting capsules (Delzicol):

- You may see parts of this drug in your child's stool. If this happens a lot, talk with the doctor.
- This drug has iron in the capsule coating. If your child has high blood iron levels or takes vitamins or other supplements with iron, talk with the doctor.

All rectal products:

- This drug may stain fabric, flooring, painted surfaces, marble, granite, vinyl, and enamel.

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.
- 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.
- Back pain, belly pain, groin pain, or blood in the urine. May be signs of a kidney stone.
- Chest pain or pressure, a fast heartbeat, or an abnormal heartbeat.
- Fever, chills, or sore throat; any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Some people may have a reaction to this drug that looks like the signs of ulcerative colitis. Call the doctor right away if your child has new or worsening stomach pain or cramps, bloody stools, fever, headache, itching, rash, red or pink eyes, or is not feeling well.
- Liver problems have happened with drugs like this one. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call the doctor right away if your child has signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Some heart problems have rarely happened with this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Raised pressure in the brain has happened with this drug. Call your child's

doctor right away if your child has a headache; dizziness; upset stomach; ringing in the ears; eye pain; or eyesight problems like blurred eyesight, seeing double, or loss of eyesight.

- Severe skin reactions may happen with this drug. These include Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN), and other serious reactions. Sometimes, body organs may also be affected. These reactions can be deadly. Get medical help right away if your child has signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin; red or irritated eyes; sores in the mouth, throat, nose, eyes, genitals, or any areas of skin; fever; chills; body aches; shortness of breath; or swollen glands.

Rectal enema:

- 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 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 products:

- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, or throwing up.
- Heartburn.
- Gas.
- Burping.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Dizziness or headache.
- Back pain.
- Cough.

All rectal products:

- Rectal 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.

Tablets:

- Some drugs may need to be given with food or on an empty stomach. For some drugs, it does not matter. Check with your pharmacist about how to give this drug to your child.
- Give this drug with a full glass of water.
- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.
- If your child has trouble swallowing, talk with the doctor.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

Long-acting capsules:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Give this drug with a full glass of water.
- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.
- Some products may be opened and sprinkled right in the mouth or on applesauce or yogurt. Some products must be swallowed whole. If your child cannot swallow this drug whole, be sure you know how to give this drug.

- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

Long-acting capsules (Apriso):

- Do not give your child antacids at the same time as this drug. Talk with the doctor.

All rectal products:

- This drug is for rectal use only. Do not give this drug by mouth.
- Your child could be on both a tablet or capsule and a rectal product at the same time.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

Rectal enema:

- Use at bedtime. Be sure you know how to use this drug. If you have questions, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.
- Shake suspension well before use.
- Remove the protective cap from the enema applicator before using a dose.
- After giving this drug, have your child stay in place for at least 30 minutes.
- Have your child keep the suspension in the rectum as long as they can. Have your child try to keep it in all night if possible.
- The enema may turn darker over time after the foil pouch has been opened. An enema may still be used if it has turned slightly darker. Do not use if it has turned dark brown. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions about whether an enema is still good to use.

Suppository:

- Use at bedtime.
- Wash your hands before and after use.

- If suppository is soft, chill in a refrigerator or run cold water over it.
- Take foil off the suppository and put in, pointed end first. Do not handle too much. Ask your child to try and keep the suppository in for 1 to 3 hours or longer if your child can. Do not cut or break the suppository.

Rectal foam:

- Use at bedtime.
- Shake well before use.
- Use an applicator to put in rectal foam.
- Wash your hands and applicator after use.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- 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.

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

All oral products:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Some products may come with a desiccant (protects the product from moisture) in the container, if the container comes with a desiccant, keep it in the bottle. Some brands may be stored without the desiccant for some time. Talk with the doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

Rectal enema:

- Give at bedtime. Be sure you know how to give this drug. If you have questions, talk with your child's doctor or pharmacist.
- Store at room temperature.
- Store rectal suspension in foil until ready to use. Do not refrigerate.

- Protect rectal suspension from heat.

Suppository:

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.
- Some brands may be stored in the refrigerator. Ask your pharmacist or check the package label.
- Protect from heat and light.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Rectal foam:

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.
- Protect from heat and sunlight.
- Do not puncture or burn even if it seems empty.
- After opening, throw away any part not used after 12 weeks.

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.
- 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.

Last Reviewed Date

2026-09-01

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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.

Mesalamine - Last updated on December 12, 2022

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