PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Sodium Phosphates

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

Fleet Enema Extra [OTC]; Fleet Enema [OTC]; Fleet Pedia-Lax Enema [OTC]; GoodSense Enema [OTC]; LaCrosse Complete [OTC]; OsmoPrep [DSC]; We Care Enema [OTC]

## Brand Names: Canada

Fleet Enema

## What is this drug used for?

### Rectal enema:

- It is used to treat constipation.

### Injection:

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

### Tablets:

- If your child has been given this form of this drug, talk with the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

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

### All products:

- 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 heart failure (weak heart).
- If your child has ever had kidney problems.
- If your child is taking another drug that has the same drug in it.

### Rectal enema:

- If your child has any of these health problems: Bowel block, hole in the bowel, or other bowel problems; electrolyte (like sodium, potassium, phosphate) problems; fluid loss (dehydrated); or had stomach or bowel surgery.
- 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.

### Injection:

- If your child has high phosphate levels, low calcium levels, or high sodium levels.

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.
- If your child is on a low-sodium or sodium-free diet, talk with the doctor. Some of these products have sodium.
- Different forms of this drug may be for use in different

ages of children. Talk with the doctor before giving this drug to a child.

### 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.

### Rectal enema:

- Do not give other laxatives or stool softeners unless told to do so by your child's doctor.
- Talk with the doctor about having your child drink lots of fluids and other ways to prevent fluid loss. If your child has a lot of fluid loss, your child may have more side effects from this drug.
- Tell the doctor if your child sweats more than usual or has fluid loss, diarrhea, increased thirst, throwing up; or decreased appetite.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- If your child has rectal bleeding or does not have a bowel movement after using this drug, talk with your child's doctor.
- Very bad kidney and heart problems have rarely

happened in people using these products to treat constipation. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Most of the time, this happened when people used more of this drug than they were told. Do not give more than 1 dose of this drug in 24 hours. If your child does not pass a stool after a dose of this drug, do not give another product that has sodium phosphate in it within 24 hours. Call the doctor to find out what to do.

- This drug may cause harm if swallowed. If this drug is swallowed, call a doctor or poison control center right away.

**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.

## 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 fluid and electrolyte problems like mood changes, confusion, muscle pain or weakness, fast or abnormal heartbeat, severe dizziness or passing out, increased thirst, seizures, feeling very tired or weak, decreased appetite, unable to pass urine or change in the amount of urine produced, dry mouth, dry eyes, or severe upset stomach or throwing up.
- Chest pain or pressure.

### Rectal enema:

- 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.
- Very bad belly cramping or bloating.

- Severe stomach pain.
- Very bad headache.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- 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:

### Rectal enema:

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

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.

### Rectal enema:

- Give enema rectally.
- Take off cap.
- Put enema tip into the rectum with gentle pressure. Do not force.
- Do not give other drugs within 2 hours of this drug.

### Injection:

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

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

### Rectal enema:

- This drug is given on an as needed basis. Do not give to your child 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?

### Rectal enema:

- Store at room temperature 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.
- 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

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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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