PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Lactobacillus

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

Advanced Probiotic [OTC]; Bilac; Culturelle Baby [OTC]; Culturelle [OTC]; DermacinRx Probisol [OTC]; Dialyvite Probiotic [OTC]; Floranex [OTC]; Folika Probiotic [DSC]; Kala [OTC]; Lactinex [OTC]; Lacto-Bifidus [OTC]; Lacto-Key [OTC]; Lacto-Pectin [OTC]; Lacto-TriBlend [OTC]; Lactojen [DSC]; Megadophilus [OTC]; MoreDophilus [OTC]; Pedia-Lax Probiotic Yums [OTC]; Probitrol [OTC]; Prodigen [DSC]; Promella in Prebiotic; Promerol; ReZyst IM [DSC]; Risa-Bid [OTC]; RisaQuad [OTC]; RisaQuad-2 [OTC]; Superdophilus [OTC]; Visbiome [OTC]; VSL #3 [OTC]; VSL #3-DS

Brand Names: Canada

Bacid; Bio-K+; Fermalac

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to keep the normal balance of bacteria in the gastrointestinal (GI) 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 the patient is a premature infant or weighs less than 1 kg (2.2 lb).

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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.
- If you are on a lactose-free diet, talk with your doctor. Some products have lactose.
- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), check labels closely. Some products have sugar.
- Different brands of this drug may be for use in different ages of children. Talk with the doctor before giving this drug to a child.
- 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.

- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Unusual thirst.
- Change in how much urine is passed.
- Muscle pain.
- Bone pain.
- Weight loss.

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:

- Gas.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Decreased appetite.
- Stomach cramps.
- Dry mouth.
- Headache.

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.

Tablets and capsules:

- Take with or without food. Take with food if it causes an upset stomach.
- You may sprinkle contents of capsule on soft food or liquid. Do not chew.

Chewable tablets and wafers:

- Chew well before swallowing.
- Drink a small amount of water, milk, or fruit juice after you swallow this drug.

Delayed-release capsules:

- Swallow whole. Do not chew, open, or crush.
- If you are taking antibiotics, take this drug at least 2 to 3 hours after taking the antibiotics.

Granules:

- Mix with cereal, food, or milk.
- Do not mix this drug with warm or hot food or drinks.

Powder:

- Mix with water as you have been told before drinking.
- You may also mix the powder with applesauce or yogurt.
- Do not mix this drug in warm or hot drinks.
- If you are taking antibiotics, take this drug at least 1 hour before or 2 hours after taking the antibiotics.

Liquid (drops):

- Shake well before use.
- This drug may be given on a spoon. Some brands may be mixed with water, breast milk, formula, or other liquids, or given on the breast. Be sure you know how to give this drug.
- Do not mix this drug in warm or hot drinks.
- 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.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

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

- Follow how to store closely.
- Some brands of this drug need to be stored in a refrigerator. Some brands of this drug need to be stored at room temperature. If you have questions about how to store this drug, talk with your pharmacist.
- Be sure you know how long you can store this drug before you need to 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.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your 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.

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

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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