

Sulfasalazine patient information leaflet

- Sulfasalazine reduces inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.
- When taking or using sulfasalazine your tears or urine may become a yellow/orange colour - this is normal and harmless.

How to take sulfasalazine

- Before beginning treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet.
- It is important that you drink plenty of fluids while you are taking sulfasalazine. Make sure you drink the equivalent of 6-8 glasses of water each day.
- If you have been given the enteric coated tablets swallow them whole (not crushed or chewed) with a glass of water.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Do not take indigestion remedies at the same time of day as the enteric coated tablets. Take them at least two hours apart.
- Sulfasalazine may cause your skin to become more sensitive to sunlight. Avoid bright sunlight and sunbeds. Use a sun cream higher than factor 15.
- Your tears or urine may become a yellow/orange colour - this is normal and harmless.
- Soft contact lenses may also become stained. If you wear soft contact lenses, it is best not to use them while you are being treated with sulfasalazine.
- If you are using sulfasalazine for a long time, it is important to keep your regular appointments with your doctor so that your progress can be checked.
- You will need to have blood tests while you are taking or using this medicine.

Can sulfasalazine cause problems?

Along with their useful effects all medicines can cause unwanted side-effects. These usually improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side-effects continue or become troublesome.

Common side-effects	What can I do if I experience this
Feeling or being sick	Eat little and often. Stick to simple foods, speak to your Doctor if symptoms do not settle
Headache	Ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headache continues speak with your doctor
Rash	Avoid scrubbing your skin; use a soap substitute; leave the affected area exposed to the air as much as possible
Loss of appetite	Speak to your doctor if this continues
Raised temperature	Ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable medicine. If a raised temperature continues speak with your doctor

Important: if you experience

- any unusual bleeding or bruising,
- a sore throat, fever (high temperature) with a general feeling of being unwell
- breathing difficulties or
- sudden severe skin rash,

contact either

* your GP on **01332 667911**

* if you are a rheumatology patient phone the nurse advice line on **01332 787710**

* if you see a gastroenterologist you may contact their secretary through hospital switchboard on **01332 340131**

* Contact **111** service if out of hours/weekend

* I B D Help line **01332 785504**