

SULFASALAZINE

Other names: Salazopyrin EN®, Salazopyrin®



Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

Why you are taking this medicine?

Sulfasalazine has both anti-inflammatory and an immunosuppressant action (e.g. it can prevent or reduce redness and swelling of the joints).

Sulfasalazine is used in inflammatory conditions such as:

- Ulcerative Colitis
- Crohn's Disease
- Rheumatoid Arthritis

Before you take this medicine

Do not take sulfasalazine if you have had a reaction to sulphonamides or salicylates such as aspirin. You should not take this medicine if you have been told that you have porphyria (a rare blood disorder) or G6PD deficiency (glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency; an enzyme deficiency).

Make sure your doctor knows if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant as you may require higher dose supplementation of folic acid.

When to take this medicine

Try to take your medicine at the same time every day. Your doctor will tell you how much to take and how often. If you are to take sulfasalazine more than once daily, it is best to divide doses evenly throughout the day. This medicine is best taken with food.

The enteric-coated preparation (Salazopyrin EN) must be swallowed whole and taken with half a glass of water. Do not crush, break or chew the enteric-coated tablet.

If you miss a dose

Take your dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- a sore throat or unexplained fever
- extreme or unnatural paleness
- skin rash, especially if you have purple or red spots and bruising of the skin
- yellow-orange discolouration of eyes, skin, urine or other body fluids
- swelling of the face or hands
- tingling in mouth or throat
- trouble breathing

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects:

- nausea, vomiting or loss of appetite
- diarrhoea or stomach cramps
- headache
- dizziness
- difficulty sleeping

This list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you.

Caution

- This medicine may cause decreased fertility in men (a reduced sperm count) which should return to normal if the medication is stopped.
- Your skin may become more sensitive to sunlight while you take this medicine. Make sure you protect your skin with sunblock (30+) and clothing if you are outdoors.
- If you are taking this medication for rheumatoid arthritis it may take 4 to 12 weeks to become effective.

Other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medication including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

If you are prescribed another medication make sure your doctor/pharmacist knows you are taking sulfasalazine.

Extra monitoring is required when sulfasalazine is taken with:

- antibiotics (e.g. rifampicin, amoxicillin)
- anticoagulant (e.g. warfarin)
- digoxin (reduced absorption)
- folic acid (reduced absorption)

Storage

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.