

# PENTASA<sup>®</sup>

Mesalazine

Suppositories

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## Consumer Medicine Information

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### What is in this leaflet

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This leaflet answers some common questions about PENTASA<sup>®</sup>.

It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

Please read this leaflet before you start using PENTASA<sup>®</sup>.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you using PENTASA<sup>®</sup> against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

**If you have any concerns about using this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

Keep this leaflet with the medicine. You may need to read it again.

### What PENTASA<sup>®</sup> is used for

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This medicine is used to treat ulcerative proctitis, a disease with inflammation, ulcers and sores in the rectum (back passage) causing bleeding, stomach pain, and diarrhoea.

The active ingredient in this medicine is mesalazine. It is an anti-inflammatory agent, chemically similar to aspirin and is thought to work by reducing inflammation in the rectum.

**Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why this medicine has been prescribed for you.** Your doctor may have prescribed it for another reason.

There is no evidence that PENTASA<sup>®</sup> is addictive.

It is available only with a doctor's prescription.

It is not expected to affect your ability to drive a car or operate machinery.

### Before you use PENTASA<sup>®</sup>

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#### **When you must not use it**

**Do not use PENTASA<sup>®</sup> if you have an allergy to:**

- to any medicine containing mesalazine or aspirin-like medicines
- any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

- shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing
- swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body
- rash, itching or hives on the skin.

**Do not take PENTASA<sup>®</sup> if you have a severe kidney or liver problem.**

**Do not use this medicine after the expiry date printed on the pack or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.**

If it has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

#### **Before you start to use it**

**Tell your doctor if you have allergies to any other medicines, foods, preservatives or dyes.**

**Tell your doctor if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:**

- a known allergy to PENTASA<sup>®</sup>, sulphasalazine or

aspirin-like medicines, or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

- a kidney or liver problem.
- a bleeding disorder
- a history of asthma

**Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant or are breast-feeding.**

Your doctor can discuss with you the risks and benefits involved. PENTASA<sup>®</sup> should be used with caution during pregnancy and lactation and only if the potential benefits outweigh the possible hazards in the opinion of the doctor.

**If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell him/her before you start using PENTASA<sup>®</sup>.**

#### **Using other medicines**

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are using any other medicines, including any that you get without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.**

There is no information available on interactions between PENTASA<sup>®</sup> and other medicines. However, mesalazine belongs to a group of medicines called salicylates that may interfere with some medicines:

**Medicines that may have their effects increased if used with PENTASA include:**

- anti-coagulants, used to thin blood or stop blood clots (e.g. warfarin). When PENTASA is used with these medicines, it may increase the medicine's effects on thinning your blood.
- glucocorticoids, used to treat inflammation, swelling or allergies (e.g. prednisolone). When PENTASA is used with these medicines, it may increase the undesirable gastric effects caused by these medicines.
- sulphonylureas, used to lower blood sugar and treat diabetes (e.g. glibenclamide, gliclazide).

When PENTASA is used with these medicines, it may increase the medicine's effect on lowering your blood glucose.

- methotrexate, used to treat some kinds of cancers and arthritis. When PENTASA is used with this medicine, it may increase the possibility of the medicine producing toxic effects on your body.

**Medicines that may have their effects decreased if used with PENTASA include:**

- probenecid or sulfapyrazone, used to treat gout and other conditions. When PENTASA is used with these medicines it may decrease the effectiveness of the medicine.
- spirinolactone or frusemide, used to increase the amount of urine produced, and to lower blood pressure. When PENTASA is used with these medicines it may decrease the effectiveness of the medicine.
- rifampicin, used to treat tuberculosis. When PENTASA is used with this medicine it may decrease the effectiveness of the medicine.

**Medicines that may have a greater likelihood of reducing bone marrow activity if used with PENTASA include:**

- azathioprine, used to suppress the immune system
- mercaptopurine, used to treat leukaemia.

Your doctor and pharmacist have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking this medicine.

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## **How to use PENTASA<sup>®</sup>**

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**Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully.**

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

If possible, go to the toilet and empty your bowels before using a suppository. The suppository will

work better if the bowel has been emptied.

Insert the suppository in the rectum (back passage).

Detailed instructions for use are available in the pack.

**Do not swallow the suppository.**

**If you do not understand the instructions on the packaging, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.**

### ***How much to use***

1-2 suppositories daily or as directed by your doctor.

### ***How long to use it***

**Continue using your medicine for as long as your doctor tells you.**

This medicine helps to control your condition, but does not cure it. It is important to keep using your medicine even if you feel well.

### ***If you forget to use it***

**If it is almost time for your next suppository, skip the one you missed and use your next suppository when you are meant to.**

**Otherwise, use it as soon as you remember, and then go back using your medicine as you would normally.**

**Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.**

This may increase the chance of you getting an unwanted side effect.

**If you are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

**If you have trouble remembering to use your medicine, ask your pharmacist for some hints.**

### ***If you use too much (overdose) or swallow the medicine***

**Immediately telephone your doctor or the Poisons Information Centre (telephone 0800 764 766) for advice, or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have used too much PENTASA<sup>®</sup>, particularly if the medicine has been taken by mouth. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.**

You may need urgent medical attention.

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## **While you are using PENTASA<sup>®</sup>**

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### ***Things you must do***

**If you are about to be started on any new medicine, remind your doctor and pharmacist that you are taking PENTASA<sup>®</sup>.**

**Have all blood tests recommended by your doctor.** PENTASA<sup>®</sup> may cause kidney, liver or blood problems in a few people. You should have regular blood tests to check your kidney function.

**Tell any other doctors, dentists, and pharmacists who treat you that you are using this medicine.**

**If you are going to have surgery, tell the surgeon or anaesthetist that you are using this medicine.**

It may affect other medicines used during surgery.

**If you become pregnant while using this medicine, tell your doctor immediately.**

### ***Things you must not do***

**Do not use PENTASA<sup>®</sup> to treat any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.**

**Do not give your medicine to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.**

**Do not stop using your medicine or lower the dosage without checking with your doctor.**

If you stop using it suddenly, your condition may worsen.

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## Side effects

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**Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are using PENTASA®.**

This medicine helps most people but it may have unwanted side effects in a few people. All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical attention if you get some of the side effects.

**Do not be alarmed by the following lists of side effects. You may not experience any of them.**

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.**

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any of the following and they worry you:**

- headache
- diarrhoea
- abdominal or stomach pain
- nausea (feeling sick)
- vomiting
- discomfort, pain or itching in the anus or rectum, or feeling that you need to have a bowel movement, during or after inserting the medicine

The above list includes the more common side effects of your medicine. They are usually mild and short-lived.

**Tell your doctor as soon as possible if you notice any of the following:**

- bruising easily, unusual bleeding (e.g. nosebleeds), or signs of infection such as fever, chills, sore throat and mouth ulcers
- muscle aches and pains
- painful joints
- severe upper stomach pain, nausea and vomiting
- chest pain, sometimes spreading to the neck and shoulders, or with fever
- mild skin rash, hives or itching
- numbness, tingling or weakness of the arms and legs
- yellowing of the skin or eyes, dark coloured urine
- worsening of your condition

The above list includes serious side effects which may require medical attention. Serious side effects are rare.

**If you notice any of the following, tell your doctor immediately or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital:**

- sudden signs of allergic reactions such as rash, itching or hives on the skin, shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing, or swelling of limbs, face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat which may cause difficulty swallowing or breathing.
- severe stomach cramps and/or pain, bloody diarrhoea, fever, severe headache and skin rash
- rash with severe blisters and bleeding of the eyes, mouth, lips, nose and genitals e.g. erythema multiforme or Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS) / Toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN)

The above list includes very serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation. These side effects are very rare.

**Other rare side effects that have been reported with PENTASA® include:**

- changes in kidney function
- changes in liver function e.g. raised liver enzymes
- changes in the blood
- hair loss
- Increased sensitivity of your skin to sun and ultraviolet light (photosensitivity)
- Kidney stones may develop with use of mesalazine. Symptoms may include pain in sides of abdomen and blood in urine. Take care to drink sufficient amount of liquid during treatment with mesalazine.
- Low sperm count ( this is reversible)

As a precaution, your doctor may do blood tests to check if there are any changes in your blood, kidney, reproductive or liver function.

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything that is making you feel unwell.**

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some people.

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## After using PENTASA®

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### Storage

**Keep your suppositories in the packaging until it is time to use them.**

If you take the suppository out of the packaging it may not keep well.

**Keep your suppositories in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C, away from moisture, heat or sunlight**

**Do not store PENTASA® or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it on a window sill or in the car.** Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

**Keep it where children cannot reach it.**

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

### ***Disposal***

**If your doctor tells you to stop using this medicine or the expiry date has passed, ask your pharmacist what to do with any medicine that is left over.**

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## **Product description**

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### ***What it looks like***

PENTASA<sup>®</sup> suppositories are supplied in a pack of 30. Each suppository is protected in an aluminium foil blister.

### ***Ingredients***

PENTASA<sup>®</sup> suppositories contain 1g mesalazine as the active ingredient, as well as the following inactive ingredients:

- povidone
- macrogol 6000
- magnesium stearate
- talc

This medicine does not contain sucrose, gluten, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

### ***Distributor***

Pharmaco (NZ) Ltd  
4 Fisher Crescent  
Mt Wellington  
Auckland 1060

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