

Asacolon 1600 mg modified-release tablets

mesalazine

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start using this medicine because it contains important information for you.

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

What is in this leaflet

1. What Asacolon is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you use Asacolon
3. How to use Asacolon
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1. What Asacolon is and what it is used for

Asacolon contains the active substance mesalazine. It is an anti-inflammatory medicine used for the treatment of ulcerative colitis. Ulcerative colitis is a disease in which the lining of the large intestine (colon) or the back passage (rectum) becomes inflamed (red and swollen). This may lead to frequent and bloody stools, often with abdominal cramps. Asacolon treats and prevents inflammation throughout the entire colon and rectum (mild to moderate acute ulcerative colitis and for the prevention of relapse).

2. What you need to know before you use Asacolon

Do not use Asacolon:

- if you are allergic to mesalazine or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in section 6).
- if you are allergic to salicylates (e.g. acetylsalicylic acid)
- if you have severe liver problems
- if you have severe kidney problems

Warnings and precautions

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using Asacolon if you have any medical conditions or illnesses, particularly if you have:

- any lung disease problems, e.g. asthma.
- impaired function of kidneys or lungs, especially if you are elderly.
- suffered an allergy to sulphasalazine in the past.
- had an allergic reaction of your heart such as inflammation of the heart muscle or heart sac. If you have had previous suspected mesalazine-induced allergic reactions of your heart, then Asacolon must not be used. Asacolon can be used with care if you have had a previous allergic reaction of the heart not caused by mesalazine.

If you have a stomach ulcer, you should use Asacolon with care.

Test for your liver, kidney and blood

Before and while you are taking Asacolon, your doctor may want to check that your liver, kidneys, blood and lungs are working properly.

Children and adolescents

Do not give this medicine to children or adolescents under the age of 18 years of age, because Asacolon has not been tested in this age group.

Other medicines and Asacolon

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicines such as:

- Medicines that prevent the formation of blood clots (anticoagulants, e.g. warfarin). The effect of these medicines could be increased or decreased, the effect this may have on you is unclear.
- Medicines affecting the immune system (e.g. azathioprine, 6-mercaptopurine or thioguanine). Used together with Asacolon, these medicines may lead to life-threatening infections (see Section 4).
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (for example: medicines containing acetylsalicylic acid, ibuprofen or diclofenac)

Asacolon with food and drink

Please refer to section 3.

Pregnancy and breast-feeding

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine. Since mesalazine is excreted in breast milk in small quantities, due care should be taken if using Asacolon whilst breast-feeding. If the infant develops diarrhoea, breast-feeding should be discontinued.

Driving and using machines

Asacolon has no or negligible influence on the ability to drive and use machines. However, if you are affected in any way you should not drive or operate machinery.

3. How to use Asacolon

Always use Asacolon exactly as your doctor has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

The tablets must be swallowed whole preferably with a glass of water. Do not chew, crush or break the tablets before swallowing. This is important for these tablets with modified release, if the tablets are not swallowed whole, they may not work as intended.

Asacolon can be taken with or without food.

Your doctor will decide which dose you should take.

The recommended dose is:

Adults

Active phase of disease: When the disease is getting worse, the dose can be increased up to 4800 mg (three tablets) daily taken once daily or as one tablet 2 to 3 times a day.

Maintenance treatment: 1600 mg taken daily.

If you take more Asacolon than you should

If you take more Asacolon than you should, or if children have been taking medicine by accident, please contact your doctor, the nearest hospital or pharmacy to get an opinion of the risk and advice on action to be taken. Take the box with you, if possible

If you forget to take Asacolon

If you forget to take a dose at the right time, just take the next dose as normal. Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

If you stop using Asacolon

Use Asacolon for as long as your doctor prescribed it to you. Talk to your doctor before changing or stopping the treatment.

If you have any further questions on the use of this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

4. Possible side effects

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

Stop taking Asacol immediately and seek urgent medical advice if

you develop one or more of these symptoms: unexplained bruising (without injury), bleeding under your skin, purple spots or patches under your skin, anaemia (feeling tired, weak and looking pale, especially on lips and nails), fever (high temperature), acute stomach pain, sore throat or unusual bleeding (e.g. nose bleeds).

Asacol can in very rare cases affect the white blood cells so, in those cases, your immune system could get worse. If you get an infection with symptoms such as fever with serious worsening of your general condition, or fever with local symptoms of infection such as sore throat/pharynx/mouth or urinary problems you should immediately see your doctor. Blood tests can then be taken to check for lack of white blood cells (agranulocytosis). It is important that you inform your doctor about all of your medications.

Other side effects:

Common: may affect up to 1 in 10 people

- rash
- indigestion

Uncommon: may affect up to 1 in 100 people

- high number of white blood cells called eosinophil granulocytes
- sensation of tingling, pricking and numbness
- itching skin, hives
- chest pain

Rare: may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people

- headache
- dizziness
- inflammation of the heart with signs like chest pains or palpitations
- diarrhoea, stomach pain, wind (flatulence), feeling of unease and discomfort in the stomach with an urge to vomit and vomiting
- increased sensitivity of your skin to sun and ultraviolet light (photosensitivity)

Very rare: may affect up to 1 in 10,000 people

- severe reduction in blood cells which can cause weakness, bruising or make infections more likely, low blood cell counts; reduction in blood platelets which increases the risk of bleeding
- allergic reactions such as rash
- fever that occurs while taking the medicine and which disappears when the medicine is stopped (drug fever)
- immune system disease that can involve organs and joints
- ulcerative colitis involving the entire large intestine
- abnormal or damaged nerves giving a sensation of numbness or tingling
- lung disease (scarring of lung tissue, allergic reaction) resulting in difficulty in breathing or wheezing and collection of fluid in the lungs, pneumonia
- inflamed pancreas (associated with pain in upper abdomen and back and feeling sick)
- abnormal liver function tests, hepatitis (inflammation of the liver giving rise to flu-like symptoms and jaundice)
- hair loss
- muscle or joint pain
- kidney problems (such as inflammation and scarring of the kidney), kidney failure, which may be reversible if treatment is stopped early
- reversible decrease in sperm production

Not known: frequency cannot be estimated from the available data

- disorder of the immune system (lupus-like syndrome) which can cause inflammation of the heart sac or membranes around the lungs and heart, rash and/or joint pain
- weight loss
- laboratory test results out of normal range

Reporting of side effects

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via

HPRa Pharmacovigilance
Earlsfort Terrace
IRL - Dublin 2
Tel: +353 1 6764971
Fax: +353 1 6762517
Website: www.hpra.ie
e-mail: medsafety@hpra.ie

By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

5. How to store Asacol

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children.

Do not take this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the carton and the blister strips. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

This medicine does not require any special storage conditions.

No special requirements for disposal.

6. Contents of the pack and other information

What Asacol contains:

- The active substance is mesalazine. One tablet contains 1600 mg mesalazine.
- The other ingredients are:
 - magnesium stearate (E 470B)
 - methacrylic acid-methyl methacrylate copolymer (1:2)
 - triethylcitrate
 - iron oxide yellow (E 172)
 - iron oxide red (E 172)
 - macrogol
 - microcrystalline cellulose
 - glycerol monostearate 40-55
 - hypromellose
 - maize starch
 - polysorbate 80
 - potassium dihydrogen phosphate
 - colloidal anhydrous silica
 - sodium starch glycolate (type A).

What Asacol looks like and contents of the pack

Asacol 1600 mg modified-release tablets are reddish brown in colour. The tablets are oblong shaped and approximately 2.3 cm in length, 1.1 cm in width and 0.9 cm in thickness.

Tablets are available in packs in blister strips. The blister strips are packed in a carton containing either 30 tablets, 60 tablets or 90 tablets.

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

Marketing Authorisation Holder and Manufacturer

The marketing authorisation holder is:

Tillotts Pharma GmbH
Warmbacher Str. 80
79618 Rheinfelden
Germany

The manufacturer is:

Haupt Pharma Wülfing GmbH
Bethelner Landstrasse 18
D - 31028 Gronau
Germany

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