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## docusate

Generic Name: docusate (DOK ue sate)  
 Brand names: *Calcium Stool Softener, Colace, Correctol Softgel Extra Gentle, D-S Caps, Diocto, Doc-Q-Lace, Docu, Docu Soft, Doculase, Docusoft S, DocuSol, DOK, DOS, DSS, Dulcolax Stool Softener, Enemeez Mini, Fleet Sof-Lax, Kao-Tin, Kaopectate Stool Softener, Kasof, Phillips Stool Softener, Silace, Sur-Q-Lax, ...[show all 46 brand names.](#)*

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## What is docusate?

Docusate is a stool softener. It makes bowel movements [softer](#) and easier to pass.

Docusate is used to treat or prevent constipation, and to reduce pain or rectal damage caused by hard stools or by straining during bowel movements.

Docusate may also be used for other purposes not listed in this [medication](#) guide.

## What is the most important information I should know about docusate?

You should not use docusate if you are allergic to it, or if you have a blockage in your intestines. Do not use docusate while you are sick with nausea, vomiting, or stomach pain. Do not take mineral oil while using docusate, unless your doctor tells you to. Ask a doctor or pharmacist before using docusate if you are on a low-salt [diet](#), if you are pregnant or breast-feeding, or if you have recently had a sudden change in your bowel habits lasting for longer than 2 weeks.

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## Related Docusate Information

- OTC Rx** Availability Rx and/or OTC
  - N** Pregnancy Category Not yet classified
  - N/A** CSA Schedule Not a controlled drug
- This document has been reviewed by one or more clinical specialists. See our [editorial policy](#) for more information.

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## What should I discuss with my healthcare provider before using docusate?

You should not use docusate if you are allergic to it, or if you have a blockage in your intestines. Do not use docusate while you are sick with nausea, vomiting, or stomach pain. Do not take mineral oil while using docusate, unless your doctor tells you to.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist if it is safe for you to take docusate:

- if you are on a low-salt diet; or
- if you have recently had a sudden change in your bowel habits lasting for longer than 2 weeks.

It is not known whether docusate will harm an unborn [baby](#). Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant while using this medication. It is not known whether docusate passes into breast milk or if it could harm a nursing baby. Do not use this medication without telling your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby. Do not give this medication to a child younger than 2 years old without the advice of a doctor.

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## How should I use docusate?

Use exactly as directed on the label, or as prescribed by your doctor. Do not use in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

Take docusate tablets or capsules with a full glass of water. Drink plenty of liquids while you are taking docusate. Do not crush, chew, or break a docusate capsule. Swallow it whole. Measure liquid medicine with a special dose-measuring spoon or medicine cup, not with a regular table spoon. If you do not have a dose-measuring device, ask your pharmacist for one. Mix the liquid with 6 to 8 ounces of milk, fruit juice, or infant formula and drink the mixture right away.

Do not take docusate rectal enema by mouth. It is for use only in your rectum. Wash your hands before and after using docusate rectal enema.

Try to empty your bowel and [bladder](#) just before using the enema.

Twist off the applicator tip. Lie down on your left side with your knees bent, and gently insert the tip of the enema applicator into the rectum. Squeeze the tube to empty the entire contents into the rectum. Throw away the tube, even if there is still some medicine left in it.

After using docusate, you should have a bowel movement within 12 to 72 hours. Call your doctor if you have not had a bowel movement within 1 to 3 days.

Do not use docusate for longer than 7 days unless your doctor has told you to. Overuse of a stool softener can lead to serious [medical problems](#). Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

## What happens if I miss a dose?

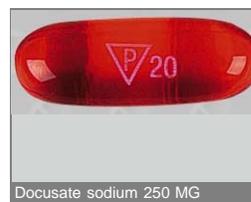
Since docusate is used as needed, you may not be on a dosing schedule. If you are using the

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medication regularly, use the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not use extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. Overdose symptoms may include nausea, vomiting or stomach pain.

## What should I avoid while using docusate?

Avoid using laxatives or other stool softeners unless your doctor has told you to. Avoid using the bathroom just after using docusate enema.

## Docusate side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction: hives; [difficulty breathing](#); swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat. Stop using docusate and call your doctor at once if you have a serious side effect such as:

- rectal bleeding or irritation;
- numbness or a rash around your rectum;
- severe diarrhea or stomach cramps; or
- continued constipation.

Less serious side effects may include:

- mild diarrhea; or
- mild nausea.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for [medical advice](#) about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

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## Docusate Dosing Information

Usual Adult Dose for Constipation:

Oral: 50 to 400 mg (using any of the salt forms) orally administered in 1 to 4 equally divided doses each day.

Rectal: 200 to 283 mg rectally administered as an enema once or twice.

Alternative: 50 to 100 mg (docusate sodium liquid) added to a retention or flushing enema once a day.

taken?

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### Usual Pediatric Dose for Constipation:

#### Oral:

less than 3 years: 10 to 40 mg (docusate sodium) orally divided in 1 to 4 doses.

3 to 6 years: 20 to 60 mg (docusate sodium) orally divided in 1 to 4 doses.

6 to 12 years: 40 to 150 mg (docusate sodium) orally divided in 1 to 4 doses.

greater than 12 years: 50 to 400 mg (using any of the salt forms) orally administered in 1 to 4 equally divided doses each day.

#### Rectal:

3 to 18 years: 50 to 100 mg (docusate sodium liquid) added to a retention or flushing enema once a day.

Alternative: 200 to 283 mg rectally administered as an enema once daily as needed for constipation.

## What other drugs will affect docusate?

There may be other drugs that can interact with docusate. Tell your doctor about all medications you use. This includes prescription, over-the-counter, [vitamin](#), and herbal products. Do not start a new medication without telling your doctor.

## More docusate resources

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- [Constipation](#)

## Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about docusate.

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