

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center

Medication Information Sheet for Sulfasalazine

Brand Names: Azulfidine

Generic Names: sulfasalazine

Drug Class: Sulfa/Gastrointestinal anti-inflammatory/Salicylate-sulfonamide

What does this medication do?

Sulfasalazine is used to treat and maintain remission in ulcerative colitis. Once the medication reaches the colon, the normal flora (bacteria) of the gut break the chemical bond between the sulfa and the salicylate (5-ASA). The 5-ASA works topically (on the surface) of the colon to reduce inflammation.

Possible Side Effects:

This medication is well tolerated by most people. If you have problems with less serious side effects, please talk with your doctor. Often, these side effects lessen and/or disappear with decrease of dosage.

- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Abdominal pain
- Temporary decrease in sperm counts in men. Please tell your doctor if you are trying to conceive.

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

- Skin rash
- Fever
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling of the lips or tongue
- Jaundice
- Change in the frequency of urination

Dosage and Administration:

- This medication may be taken with food
- Be sure to maintain adequate hydration by increasing the amount of non-caffeinated beverages you drink daily
- You will need to take the vitamin supplement called folic acid while on sulfasalazine
- Sulfasalazine can decrease the effect of digoxin and iron
- Sulfasalazine can increase the effects of oral anticoagulants (e.g., Coumadin), oral hypoglycemic medications (e.g., Glucophage, Avandia, Glucotrol, DiaBeta), and methotrexate
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember