

Does Sulfasalazine affect fertility or pregnancy?

It is safe to continue Sulfasalazine during pregnancy and breastfeeding. However, the nature of your illness may affect pregnancy. It is best to discuss plans for pregnancy with your doctor.

In males, Sulfasalazine can cause a fall in sperm count, therefore leading to a temporary decrease in male fertility; but this is reversible upon stopping the medicine.

Can I have immunisations while on Sulfasalazine?

Pneumococcal, influenza, hepatitis A and B, tetanus vaccinations are allowed. Avoid immunisations with live vaccines such as polio, varicella (chicken pox), measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

Are there any alternatives to Sulfasalazine?

Your doctor will advise you on the safest and most effective option. If you have any concerns, do raise them with your doctor.

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Medication Information for Patients

SULFASALAZINE



Why am I being prescribed Sulfasalazine?

Sulfasalazine is used to treat arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Sulfasalazine works by modifying the immune system.

When and how do I take Sulfasalazine?

The tablets can be given up to four times a day and should be taken with or after meals.

Sulfasalazine should be taken with a glass of water. Do not crush or chew the tablets. They should be swallowed whole.

What dose do I take?

Each tablet is 500mg. A suitable dose will be prescribed by your doctor depending on your symptoms and extent of your condition. Sulfasalazine may be given in combination with other medications as deemed necessary by your doctor. It should be taken after food.

When does Sulfasalazine work?

Sulfasalazine does not work immediately. You need to take your medication over a period of time before you notice any benefit, provided you take them as prescribed.

How is Sulfasalazine stored?

The tablets should be stored at room temperature. Keep out of reach from children.

Do I have to do any blood tests while taking Sulfasalazine?

Rarely, Sulfasalazine may lower blood counts and cause liver inflammation. These are usually reversible if detected early. It can also affect the kidneys.

It is not safe to continue Sulfasalazine if you do not come for regular blood checks.

Are there any medications to avoid while on Sulfasalazine?

Generally, you should show your doctor and pharmacist all other medications you are taking or plan to take, including supplements and over-the-counter medications.

May I drink alcohol while on Sulfasalazine?

There is no reason to avoid alcohol completely while taking Sulfasalazine, as long as it is consumed in moderation.

What if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose or forget to take your medicine, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule the following day.

Do not double the next dose to make up for the missed dose.

What are the possible side effects I can expect while taking Sulfasalazine?

Side effects	Warning Signs	Things you need to do
Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, diarrhoea or constipation		This may occur when the dose of Sulfasalazine is increased. Inform your doctor, who may adjust the dose.
Dizziness, headache		Your doctor may adjust the dose of your medication.
Discolouration of urine, tears or saliva		This is expected due to degradation of the medication in the body. It is harmless.
Rashes		Stop the medication immediately and inform your doctor. A small number of patients may be sensitive or allergic to sulfasalazine.
Liver inflammation	Yellow eyes, tea-coloured urine, constant abdominal pain	Inform your doctor if you experience these symptoms. Do regular liver function tests as advised by your doctor.
Low blood counts	Easy bruising, severe sore throat, tiredness, paleness	Do regular blood count monitoring as advised by your doctor.

Please seek medical attention if you experience any symptoms mentioned above.