

Treatment Information

Sulphasalazine

Sulphasalazine is used to treat inflammatory arthritis and some inflammatory bowel diseases. It is given to reduce inflammation in your joints. It is not a painkiller and you should continue to take your other medication as advised.

The tablets

Sulphasalazine tablets are usually mustard coloured and round or oval-shaped. They come in one strength, 500mg. Sulphasalazine is also known by the trade name, Salazopyrin.

How do I take sulphasalazine?

Sulphasalazine tablets should be taken every day. You will start on a small dose that will be gradually increased over four weeks as shown in the table below:

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Morning	1 tablet	1 tablet	2 tablets	2 tablets
Evening	-----	1 tablet	1 tablet	2 tablets

Sulphasalazine tablets have a special coating and should not be crushed. They should be taken after food with a glass of water. You should avoid taking indigestion medications at the same time of day as the sulphasalazine. If you miss a dose, just take the next dose as usual. Do not double the next dose to make up for the one you missed.

How long will it take to work?

It may take 6 to 12 weeks before any improvement is felt and you should continue taking your other medication as advised.

Are there any side effects?

As with all medication some people may experience side effects.

Diarrhoea nausea indigestion
Dizziness bruising rashes
Mouth ulcers headaches

Sulphasalazine can affect your blood and liver function.

What tests will I have?

Blood tests (full blood count, liver function tests) to assess the effects of sulphasalazine will be done two weeks after starting the tablets. These blood tests will continue to be done at regular intervals.

Additional information

Sulphasalazine may colour your urine orange/dark yellow. This is just the colour of the tablets and is not important.

Rheumatology department Patient Information

It may cause temporary infertility in men. This is reversible when the drug is stopped. If you are planning a family or if you become pregnant while taking sulphasalazine you should discuss this with your doctor as soon as possible.

Sulphasalazine may stain extended-wear soft contact lenses orange. Tell your doctor if you wear contact lenses.

You should see your doctor if you develop any signs of infection.

Contact Details

If you have any further questions or need advice about your treatment phone the Rheumatology Advice line on

01202 442849.

www.poole.nhs.uk/our_services/rheumatology.asp

For further health-related information, please contact:

The Health Information & Resource Centre

Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Longfleet Road

Poole

BH15 2JB

Telephone: (01202) 448003

Rheumatology Practitioners

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We can supply this information in larger print, on audiotape, or have it translated for you. A member of staff will be happy to discuss this with you. Please call PALS on 01202 448499 or the Health Information Centre on 01202 448003 for further advice