Potassium Binding Agents

(Calcium Resonium: calcium polystyrene sulfonate, Kayexalate: sodium polystyrene sulfonate)

BC Renal Agency
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

PHARMACY INFO SHEET

WHAT IT DOES:

These medications are used to decrease or prevent high potassium levels in the blood.

HOW IT WORKS:

These medications bind excess potassium in the gut, which is then eliminated in the stool.

HOW TO TAKE IT:

If using the powder, mix the amount as listed on the container with a small amount of water to make a slurry and drink right away. To prevent constipation, this medication is usually followed with 1-2 tablespoonfuls of sorbitol or lactulose, which are laxatives.

If using the suspension, shake well and take according to the directions on the label. With the suspension, the medication is already mixed with sorbitol so you do not need to take any extra sorbitol or lactulose to prevent constipation.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU MISS A DOSE:

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is within 3 hours of your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. DO NOT double the dose.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS:

Constipation, diarrhea, loss of appetite, nausea or vomiting may occur. Taking half the dose but twice a day (instead of once) may reduce diarrhea. Contact your doctor if any of the side effects persist or become severe and intolerable. Contact your doctor if you develop swelling of feet or lower legs, confusion, irregular heart beat, severe muscle weakness.

Regular use of Kayexalate may increase thirst and make it difficult to limit fluid intake.

RELATION TO DIET:

Limit your potassium intake. Discuss your food choices with your dietitian. Potassium is found in a wide variety of foods including oranges, bananas, melons, tomatoes, potatoes and milk.

WHY I AM TAKING THIS MEDICINE:

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