Racecadotril for acute diarrhoea (Hidrasec)

Racecadotril reduces the symptoms of acute diarrhoea in children.
It is taken three times a day at regular intervals until the diarrhoea stops.
It is important that your child also has lots to drink, and tries to eat as normally as possible.

About racecadotril

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of medicine</th>
<th>An antidiarrhoeal medicine - an enkephalinase inhibitor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used for</td>
<td>Acute diarrhoea in adolescents and in children over 3 months of age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Also called</td>
<td>Hidrasec®</td>
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<tr>
<td>Available as</td>
<td>Granules</td>
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Acute diarrhoea occurs suddenly and lasts for a short time. The most common cause is an infection (gastroenteritis). In most cases, the diarrhoea eases and goes within several days, but it can sometimes take longer. The main treatment for children with acute diarrhoea, is to have lots to drink. This will help to stop a lack of fluids in the body (dehydration), which is the main risk associated with bouts of diarrhoea.

Racecadotril is known as a prodrug. Once inside your body it is broken down into an active ingredient called thiorphan. Thiorphan reduces the amount of watery secretions that are produced by your intestines. This helps to reduce the amount of fluid that your body loses. In turn, this reduces the symptoms of diarrhoea and helps reduce the risk of dehydration.

Although medicines are not normally given to stop diarrhoea in children under 12 years old, racecadotril is suitable for children over 3 months of age. It can be prescribed for your child if their symptoms are severe, or if they persist for several days or more.

Before taking racecadotril

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine may only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before your child starts taking racecadotril it is important that your doctor knows:

- If they have a high temperature (fever) and there has been blood or pus in their stools.
- If they have any problems with the way their liver works, or any problems with the way their kidneys work.
- If they have recently received an antibiotic medicine for an infection.
- If (as adolescents) they are pregnant or breast-feeding.
- If they are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If they have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.
How to take racecadotril for acute diarrhoea

- Before starting the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about racecadotril, and it will also provide you with a full list of the side-effects which could be experienced from taking it.
- Racecadotril should be taken for acute diarrhoea exactly as your doctor tells you to. It is taken three times daily at regular intervals until the diarrhoea stops (but for no longer than seven days in total). You should give the first dose as soon as possible.
- The granules from the sachet should be mixed with food (or bottle feeds), or added to water. Make sure the granules are mixed well, and then give the dose to your child straightaway. Give your child one dose three times daily - you will be told whether to use one or two sachets for each dose, as this will depend upon your child's weight. Continue the treatment until the diarrhoea stops. This usually means when two normal stools have been passed.
- There are two strengths of racecadotril sachets: 10 mg and 30 mg. The 10 mg sachets are suitable for infants who weigh up to 12 kilograms. Children weighing more than this will be prescribed the higher 30 mg strength sachet.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Your doctor will also prescribe an oral rehydration solution for your child. This is to help replace the water and salts (electrolytes) that are being lost due to the diarrhoea. Make sure that you follow the instructions your doctor gives you for taking this.
- It is best not to have drinks that contain a lot of sugar, such as cola or pop, as they can sometimes make diarrhoea worse.
- Some infections causing diarrhoea are very easily passed on from person to person. The following may help to prevent the spread of infection to others:
  - Make sure hands are washed thoroughly after going to the toilet. Ideally, use liquid soap in warm running water, but any soap is better than none. Dry properly after washing.
  - Don't share towels and flannels.
  - Don't prepare or serve food for others.
  - Regularly clean the toilet, including the handle and lid.
- If you suspect that your child is becoming lacking in fluids (dehydrated), it is important that you obtain medical advice quickly. Symptoms of dehydration in children include passing little urine, a dry mouth, a dry tongue and lips, fewer tears when crying, sunken eyes, and being irritable or lethargic.
- If the diarrhoea continues even after taking racecadotril for seven days, make another appointment for your child to see a doctor.

Can racecadotril cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. Side-effects associated with racecadotril are uncommon - see the list below. The best place to find a full list of the side-effects which can be associated with the medicine, is from the manufacturer’s printed information leaflet supplied with the medicine. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following become troublesome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racecadotril side-effects</th>
<th>What can I do if my child experiences this?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skin reactions or rash</td>
<td>If severe, stop giving the granules and contact a doctor for advice</td>
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How to store racecadotril

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that someone might have taken an overdose of this medicine, contact the accident and emergency department of your local hospital for advice.

If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are safe to take with medicines which have been prescribed.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

Further reading & references


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