

## Pentasa<sup>®</sup> (mesalazine) Fast Facts

1. Pentasa<sup>®</sup> belongs to a class of anti-inflammatory drugs called the aminosalicylates, which are used to treat and control the symptoms of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) – both ulcerative colitis (UC) and Crohn's disease (CD).
2. Pentasa<sup>®</sup> contains mesalazine, which is the cornerstone of therapy for helping control the symptoms of mild-to-moderate UC and preventing symptoms from re-appearing,<sup>1,2</sup> as well as being well-tolerated and effective in mild-to-moderate CD.<sup>2,3,4,5</sup>
3. Oral Pentasa<sup>®</sup> has a unique prolonged-release formulation, which means that it releases active drug predictably and reliably throughout the entire length of the bowel reaching all areas of inflammation.<sup>6</sup>
4. Using other forms of Pentasa<sup>®</sup> (such as enemas and suppositories) ensures that the active drug is applied at, and directly in contact with, the inflamed part of the bowel, and remains in contact for several hours.<sup>7</sup>
5. In mild-to-moderate UC, Pentasa<sup>®</sup> has been shown to be highly effective, both in the initial treatment of the active disease, improving symptoms and bringing about rapid remission within 8 weeks,<sup>8,9</sup> but also as maintenance therapy to help stop symptoms re-appearing.<sup>10,11</sup>
6. Taking Pentasa<sup>®</sup> by mouth (either as tablets or sachets) has been shown to work well in UC, with up to 80% of the drug reaching the lower parts of the bowel (colon),<sup>6,12,13</sup> whilst use of Pentasa<sup>®</sup> enemas and suppositories have been shown to be better than steroids for bringing about remissions in UC.<sup>14,15</sup>
7. In mild-to-moderate CD, Pentasa<sup>®</sup> has been shown to improve the acute symptoms significantly and to rapidly bring about remission within 2 to 4 weeks;<sup>16,17,18</sup> with the best results being seen with higher doses (up to 4g each day).<sup>16,17</sup>
8. In maintenance therapy Pentasa<sup>®</sup> reduces the likelihood of a patient's symptoms coming back<sup>17,18</sup> and is also very effective in significantly reducing the rate and severity of symptom recurrences after surgery.<sup>19</sup> The evidence in mild-to-moderate CD suggests that Pentasa<sup>®</sup> is a well-tolerated and effective therapy both for treatment of the active symptoms and for keeping symptoms from returning, and it should at least be tried before other less well-tolerated therapies.<sup>2,3,4,5</sup>

9. There is growing evidence to suggest that regular treatment with 5-ASA, such as Pentasa<sup>®</sup>, may also have additional health benefits, such as protecting patients with IBD against colorectal cancer,<sup>20,21</sup> a very serious long-term complication of the condition.

## References

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