

Treatment of High Potassium with Kayexalate® Powder in Hemodialysis

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What is Kayexalate®?

- Kayexalate® (sodium polystyrene sulfonate) is a medication that treats high potassium levels in the body.
- If not treated, high potassium levels may lead to an irregular heartbeat or cause problems with muscles and nerves.
- High potassium levels can be dangerous if you have kidney disease.

Why do I need this medication?

- The kidneys get rid of extra potassium in the blood.
- People with kidney disease are at a higher risk of having high potassium levels because their kidneys cannot filter out the extra potassium.
- You may have high potassium levels if:
 - › you have eaten high potassium foods.
 - › you have missed dialysis treatments.

- The best way to prevent high potassium levels is:
 - › Regular dialysis treatment
 - › Low potassium foods
- In some situations, Kayexalate® may be prescribed by your dialysis team to prevent or treat a high potassium level.

If you are going to miss a dialysis treatment, call the hemodialysis unit right away. You may need Kayexalate® to help lower your potassium levels.

- › For example, this can happen during a storm, when you cannot make it to dialysis.

- Most people on hemodialysis are given a prescription for Kayexalate® when they first start dialysis.
 - › Fill the prescription and keep it with you in case of an emergency.
 - › Tell your hemodialysis team if your prescription has expired, so it can be replaced right away.

How do I take Kayexalate®?

- **Only take this medication if your hemodialysis team tells you to.**
- Take this medication as told by your hemodialysis team. They will tell you how much to take.
 - › Your dose will depend on your blood potassium level.
- Your Kayexalate® should be a powder, **not a liquid.**
- Mix 1 dose with ½ cup (125 ml) of water (not juice) and drink it.
 - › Take it at least **3 hours before or 3 hours after** any other oral (taken by mouth) medications.

What are your questions?

Please ask a member of your health care team. We are here to help you.

Are there any side effects?

- Like all medications, Kayexalate® may cause side effects, like:
 - › Upset stomach
 - › Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach)
 - › Vomiting (throwing up)
 - › Constipation (not being able to poop) or diarrhea (loose, watery poop)
- Tell your health care provider if these symptoms are severe (very bad) or do not get better.

How should I store this medication?

- Store it at room temperature, away from direct light, moisture, and heat.
- **Do not** store Kayexalate® in the bathroom.
- **Store out of reach of children and pets.**
- Always keep the lid on the container.

If you have any questions about this medication, please call your dialysis unit:

Dialysis unit: _____

Phone number: _____

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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