

Treatment of High Potassium with Kayexalate[®] Powder in Hemodialysis Patients

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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.

Why do hemodialysis patients need this medication?

- Having kidney disease means you have a higher chance of having high potassium levels. You are more likely to have high potassium levels if you do not follow a low potassium diet and have regular dialysis treatments.
- **Dialysis is the best way to prevent high potassium levels.** It is important to go to your treatments, even if you do not feel well.
- If you cannot go to hemodialysis, you **may** need this medication to control your potassium level. If you cannot go for hemodialysis, call the hemodialysis unit to ask what to do.

How do I take Kayexalate®?

- **Do not take this medication unless the hemodialysis staff tells you to, even if you miss a dialysis treatment.**
- Take it at least 3 hours before or 3 hours after any other oral (taken by mouth) medications.
- Take this medication for as long as the hemodialysis staff tells you to.
- Hemodialysis staff will tell you how much to take. Use only 1 of the 3 containers your pharmacy gives you. There are 30 grams of Kayexalate® in each container. If you have a larger container, your pharmacy will teach you how to measure the dose. Kayexalate® should be provided as a powder — not liquid.
- Mix 1 dose with 1/2 cup (125 ml) of water (not juice) and drink it.

Are there any side effects?

Like all medications, Kayexalate® may cause side effects, such as:

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

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

Dialysis unit	Phone number

Looking for more health information?

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

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.