



PATIENT EDUCATION

Docusate sodium (Colace) for constipation

A plain-language guide for patients and families. Bring this to your visit. It does not replace advice from your clinician.

What this medicine is

Docusate sodium (brand example: Colace) is a stool softener. The usual adult capsule is 100 mg. It helps water mix into stool so it is easier to pass. It does not squeeze the bowel the way senna does. Many people on pain medicine use a softener plus a stimulant together.

Clinic teaching dose (confirm with your nurse)

- Often 1 to 3 capsules a day.
- May be taken as a single daily dose or split across the day.
- Drink water with each dose unless you are on a fluid limit.

Confirm with your care team. This sheet is clinic teaching, not a prescription. Softeners alone may not be enough if you are on opioids. Confirm the plan with your care team.

What you may notice

- Softer stools over a day or two, not an instant result
- Little cramping compared with stimulant laxatives
- If nothing happens, your team may add senna, Milk of Magnesia, or MiraLAX



How to take it

- Swallow capsules with water.
- Keep a simple log of capsules and stools so the nurse can adjust.
- See the Constipation printout for the full OTC ladder.

Cautions

- Ask first if you have a known bowel blockage or severe belly pain.
- Liquid docusate can taste bitter. Capsules are the usual teaching form.
- Do not use this as the only plan if you have had no stool for several days and feel sick.

When to call the clinic

- No stool for three days, vomiting, or a hard swollen belly
- Blood, black stools, or dizziness
- You cannot take pills

Questions to ask

- How many 100 mg capsules a day do you want for me?
- Should I add senna or MiraLAX now?
- Is docusate still useful if I am already on a low-fiber pelvic diet?

How to schedule or learn more

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