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## Pentosan Polysulfate

pronounced as (pen' toe san pol i sul' fate)

### Why is this medication prescribed?

Pentosan polysulfate is used to relieve bladder pain and discomfort related to interstitial cystitis, a disease that causes swelling and scarring of the bladder wall. Pentosan polysulfate is similar to a class of medications called low molecular weight heparins. It works by preventing irritation of the bladder walls.

### How should this medicine be used?

Pentosan polysulfate comes as a capsule to take by mouth. It is usually taken with water three times a day, 1 hour before or 2 hours after meals. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take pentosan polysulfate exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

### Other uses for this medicine

This medication may be prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

### What special precautions should I follow?

#### Before taking pentosan polysulfate,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to pentosan polysulfate, danaparoid (Orgaran), heparin, or any other medications.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking. Be sure to mention any of the following: anticoagulants ('blood thinners') such as warfarin (Coumadin) and aspirin. Your doctor may need to change the doses of your medications or monitor you carefully for side effects.
- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had an aneurysm, hemophilia, ulcers, low platelet count, an intestinal blockage, or liver or spleen disease.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking pentosan polysulfate, call your doctor.
- if you are having surgery, including dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that you are taking pentosan polysulfate.
- you should know that pentosan polysulfate has a blood-thinning effect and may cause increased bleeding.

## What special dietary instructions should I follow?

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, continue your normal diet.

## What should I do if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

## What side effects can this medication cause?

**Pentosan polysulfate may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:**

- hair loss
- diarrhea
- upset stomach
- heartburn
- headache
- rash
- stomach pain
- difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- moodiness
- dizziness

**Some side effects can be serious. The following symptoms are uncommon, but if you experience any of them, call your doctor immediately:**

- unusual bruising or bleeding
- nosebleed
- heavy gum bleeding
- black and tarry stools
- red blood in stools
- bloody vomit
- vomiting material that looks like coffee grounds

Pentosan polysulfate may cause other side effects. Call your doctor if you have any unusual problems while taking this medication.

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online

(<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch> [<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>] ) or by phone (1-800-332-1088).

## What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication?

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom).

Unneeded medications should be disposed of in special ways to ensure that pets, children, and other people cannot consume them. However, you should not flush this medication down the toilet. Instead, the best way to dispose of your medication is through a medicine take-back program. Talk to your pharmacist or contact your local garbage/recycling department to learn about take-back programs in your community. See the FDA's Safe Disposal of Medicines website (<http://goo.gl/c4Rm4p> [<http://goo.gl/c4Rm4p>] ) for more information if you do not have access to a take-back program.

It is important to keep all medication out of sight and reach of children as many containers (such as weekly pill minders and those for eye drops, creams, patches, and inhalers) are not child-resistant and young children can open them easily. To protect young children from poisoning, always lock safety caps and immediately place the medication in a safe location – one that is up and away and out of their sight and reach. <http://www.upandaway.org> [<http://www.upandaway.org>]

## In case of emergency/overdose

In case of overdose, call the poison control helpline at 1-800-222-1222. Information is also available online at <https://www.poisonhelp.org/help> [<https://www.poisonhelp.org/help>] . If the victim has collapsed, had a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened, immediately call emergency services at 911.

## What other information should I know?

Keep all appointments with your doctor. Your doctor will examine you after 3 months to see if your symptoms have improved.

Do not let anyone else take your medication. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about refilling your prescription.

It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You should bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.

## Brand names

- Elmiron®

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