psyllium (si-lyum)

Stimulates, Elix-Syllain, Fiberall, Fibreplus Hydrogel, Konsyl, Konsyl, Metamucil, Natural Bulk, Mylanta Natural Fiber Supplement, Natural Flax, Natural Source Fiber Laxative, Perform, Prob-Lax, Reguloid Natural, SeniTel, Slim&Fit, Vitalax, V-Lax

Classification
Therapeutic: bulk-forming agents
Pharmacologic: bulking agents

Pregnancy Category UK

Indications
Management of simple or chronic constipation, particularly if associated with a low-fiber diet. Used in situations in which straining should be avoided (after MI, surgical, prolonged bed rest). Used in the management of chronic watery diarrhea.

Action
Combines with water in the intestinal contents to form an emollient gel or viscous solution that promotes peristalsis and reduces transit time. Therapeutic Effects: Relief and prevention of constipation.

Pharmacokinetics
Absorption: Not absorbed from the GI tract.
Distribution: No distribution occurs.
Metabolism and Excretion: Excreted in feces.
Half-life: Unknown.

TIME/ACTION PROFILE (laxative effect)
ROUTE ONSET PEAK DURATION
PO 12–24 hr 2–3 days unknown

Contraindications/Precautions
Contraindicated in: Hypersensitivity; Abdominal pain, nausea, or vomiting (especially when associated with fever); Serious adhesions; Dysphagia.

Use Cautiously in: Some dosage forms contain sugar, aspartame, or excessive sodium and should be avoided in patients on restricted diets; OB: Lactation: Has been used safely.

Adverse Reactions/Side Effects
Resp: bronchospasm. GI: cramps, intestinal or esophageal obstruction, nausea, vomiting.

Interactions
Drug-Drug: May \[ absorption of warfarin, salicylates, or digoxin."

Route/Dosage
PO (Adults): 1–2 tsp/water (1–6 g psyllium) in or with a full glass of liquid 2–3 times daily. Up to 50 g daily in divided doses.
PO (Children 6 yr): 1 tsp/water (1.5–3 g psyllium) in or with 6–8 oz glass of liquid 2–3 times daily. Up to 15 g daily in divided doses.

NURSING IMPLICATIONS

Assessment
● Assess patient for abdominal distention, presence of bowel sounds, and usual pattern of bowel function.
● Assess color, consistency, and amount of bowel movements.

Lab Test Considerations: May cause decreased blood glucose levels with prolonged use of preparations containing sugar.

Potential Nursing Diagnoses
Constipation (Indications)

Implementation
● PO: Administer with a full glass of water or juice, followed by an additional glass of liquid. Solution should be taken immediately after mixing; it will congeal. Do not administer without sufficient fluid and do not chew granules.

Patient/Family Teaching
● Encourage patient to use other forms of bowel regulation, such as increasing bulk in the diet, increasing fluid intake, and increasing mobility. Normal bowel habits are individualized and may vary from 3 times/day to 3 times/week.
● May be used for long-term management of chronic constipation.
Instruct patients with cardiac disease to avoid straining during bowel movements (Valsalva maneuver).

Advise patient not to use laxatives when abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, or fever is present.

**Evaluation/Desired Outcomes**

- A soft, formed bowel movement, usually within 12–24 hr. May require 3 days of therapy for results.

Why was this drug prescribed for your patient?