**balsalazine** (ba-sal-a-zide)

**Classification**
Gastrointestinal anti-inflammatories

**Pregnancy Category** B

**Indications**
Treatment of mild-to-moderately active ulcerative colitis (Giazo indicated specifically for males).

**Action**
Drug is metabolized in the colon to mesalamine (5-aminosalicylic acid), which is a local anti-inflammatory. **Therapeutic Effects:** Reduction in the symptoms of ulcerative colitis.

**Pharmacokinetics**
Absorption: Absorption is low and variable; drug is delivered intact to the colon.
Distribution: Mostly delivered intact to the colon; remainder of distribution unknown.
Protein Binding: 99%.
Metabolism and Excretion: Following delivery to the colon, bacteria break balsalazine down into mesalamine (5-aminosalicylic acid) and an inactive metabolite; mostly excreted in feces.

**Half-life:** Mesalamine—12 hr (range 2–15 hr).

**TIME/ACTION PROFILE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROUTE</th>
<th>ONSET</th>
<th>PEAK</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>up to 8 wk</td>
<td>unknown</td>
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</table>

**Contraindications/Precautions**

- Contraindicated in: Hypersensitivity to salicylates or other metabolites.
- Use Cautiously in: Pyloric stenosis (may have prolonged gastric retention of capsules); Renal or hepatic impairment; OB: Use only if clearly needed; Lactation: Safety not established.

**Adverse Reactions/Side Effects**

**GI:** Hepatotoxicity, abdominal pain, diarrhea.

**Interactions**

**Drug-Drug:** None known.

**Route/Dosage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROUTE</th>
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<td>PO</td>
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<td>Giazo—three 1.1-g tablets twice daily for up to 8 wk.</td>
</tr>
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<td>PO (Children 5–17 yrs): three 750-mg capsules three times daily for up to 8 wk.</td>
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**NURSING IMPLICATIONS**

- Assess abdominal pain and frequency, quantity, and consistency of stools at the beginning of and throughout therapy.
- Assess patient for allergy to salicylates.
- **Lab Test Considerations:** May cause: ↑ AST, ALT, serum alkaline phosphatase, gamma glutamyl transpeptidase (GGT), LDH, and bilirubin.

**Potential Nursing Diagnoses**

- Acute pain (Indications)
- Diarrhea (Indications)

**Implementation**

- **Do not confuse Colazal with Clozaril.**
- PO: Administer capsules three times a day. Capsules may be opened and sprinkled on applesauce and taken immediately; do not store mixture. Color of powder inside of capsules may range from yellow to orange. Teeth or tongue staining may occur when powder is sprinkled on applesauce and swallowed.
- Administration twice daily withdrawn.

**Patient/Family Teaching**

- Instruct patient on the correct method of administration. Advise patient to take medication as directed, even if feeling better. Take missed doses as soon as remembered unless almost time for next dose.
- Advise patient to notify health care professional if jaundice, skin rash, difficulty breathing, or hives occur.

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**Interactions**

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- Advise patient to notify health care professional if jaundice, skin rash, difficulty breathing, or hives occur.
Instruct patient to notify health care professional if symptoms do not improve after 1–2 mo of therapy.

Evaluation/Desired Outcomes

- Decrease in diarrhea and abdominal pain in patients with ulcerative colitis.

Why was this drug prescribed for your patient?