

# iMedix: Your Personal Health Advisor.

## Xifaxan

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## Description

**Side Effects** Remember that this medication has been prescribed because your doctor has judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects. This medication may rarely cause a severe intestinal condition due to a bacteria called *C. difficile*. This condition may occur during treatment or weeks to months after treatment has stopped. Tell your doctor right away if you develop: diarrhea that doesn't stop, abdominal or stomach pain/cramping, blood/mucus in your stool. If you have these symptoms, do not use anti-diarrhea or opioid products because they may make symptoms worse. A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is rare. However, get medical help right away if you notice any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, including: rash, itching/swelling (especially of the face/tongue/throat), severe dizziness, trouble breathing. This is not a complete list of possible side effects. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist. In the US – Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or at [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch). In Canada – Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to Health Canada at 1-866-234-2345. How long does it take for this medicine to take effect? The onset of action for Xifaxan can vary depending on the condition being treated. For travelers' diarrhea, improvement in symptoms can often be seen within 24 to 48 hours of starting treatment. For conditions like hepatic encephalopathy and IBS-D, the response may be more gradual, and the full benefits may take longer to manifest. How long do the effects of this medicine last? Because rifaximin is minimally absorbed into the bloodstream, its effects are primarily localized to the gastrointestinal tract. The duration of the therapeutic effect will depend on the specific condition being treated. For travelers' diarrhea, a typical course of treatment lasts 3 days. For chronic conditions like hepatic encephalopathy and IBS-D, the duration of effect can be sustained with ongoing treatment as directed by a healthcare provider. Is it safe to consume alcohol while taking this medicine? While there are no specific warnings against alcohol consumption with Xifaxan, it's generally advisable for patients with hepatic encephalopathy or liver disease to avoid alcohol due to its potential to worsen liver function. Patients should consult their healthcare provider for personalized advice. Is this a habit forming medicine? Xifaxan is not habit-forming and does not have the potential for abuse or dependence. It is an antibiotic used for its antimicrobial effects and does not produce psychoactive effects. Can this medicine be taken during pregnancy? Xifaxan is classified as FDA Pregnancy Category C, meaning animal studies have shown an adverse effect on the fetus and there are no adequate and well-controlled studies in humans, but potential benefits may warrant use in pregnant women despite potential

risks. Decisions regarding the use of Xifaxan during pregnancy should be made with a healthcare provider, considering the potential benefits and risks. Can this medicine be taken while breast-feeding? It is not known whether rifaximin is excreted in human breast milk. Due to the minimal systemic absorption of rifaximin, it is unlikely to pose a significant risk to a nursing infant. However, breastfeeding mothers should consult with their healthcare provider to make an informed decision regarding the use of Xifaxan while breastfeeding.

**Uses** This medication is used to treat diarrhea caused by the common bacteria known as *E. coli* ("traveler's diarrhea"). Rifaximin should not be used if you have a fever or bloody diarrhea. It works by stopping the growth of bacteria. This antibiotic treats only bacterial infections. It will not work for viral infections (such as common cold, flu). Using any antibiotic when it is not needed can cause it to not work for future infections. Rifaximin is also used to treat irritable bowel syndrome with diarrhea. It is also used to prevent a brain problem caused by liver disease (hepatic encephalopathy). It may help you think more clearly.

**How to use Xifaxan** Read the Patient Information Leaflet if available from your pharmacist before you start taking rifaximin and each time you get a refill. If you have any questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist. The dosage is based on your medical condition and response to treatment.

To treat traveler's diarrhea, take this medication by mouth with or without food as directed by your doctor, usually 3 times a day (every 8 hours) for 3 days. To treat irritable bowel syndrome with diarrhea, take this medication by mouth with or without food as directed by your doctor, usually 3 times a day for 14 days. To prevent hepatic encephalopathy, take this medication by mouth with or without food as directed by your doctor, usually 2 times a day (every 12 hours). For the best effect, take this antibiotic at evenly spaced times. To help you remember, take this medication at the same time(s) every day. For traveler's diarrhea, continue to take this medication until the full prescribed amount is finished, even if symptoms disappear after a few days. Stopping the medication too early may result in a return of the infection. Tell your doctor if you are still having diarrhea after 1 to 2 days, if you have bloody diarrhea, or if you have a fever along with the diarrhea. Tell your doctor if your condition does not improve or if it worsens.

**Precautions** Before taking rifaximin, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to other rifamycins (rifampin, rifabutin); or if you have any other allergies. This product may contain inactive ingredients, which can cause allergic reactions or other problems. Talk to your pharmacist for more details. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history. Rifaximin may cause live bacterial vaccines (such as typhoid vaccine) to not work well. Tell your health care professional that you are using rifaximin before having any immunizations/vaccinations. Before having surgery, tell your doctor or dentist about all the products you use (including prescription drugs, nonprescription drugs, and herbal products). During pregnancy, this medication should be used only when clearly needed. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. It is unknown if this drug passes into breast milk. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

**Overdose** If someone has overdosed and has serious symptoms such as passing out or trouble breathing, call 911. Otherwise, call a poison control center right away. US residents can call their local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. Canada residents can call a provincial poison control center. Do not share this medication with others. This medication has been prescribed for your current condition only. Do not use it later for another infection unless your doctor tells you to. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose. Take your next dose at the regular time. Do not double the dose to catch up. Store at room temperature away from light and moisture. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medications away from children and pets. Do not flush medications down the toilet or pour them into a drain unless instructed to do so. Properly discard this product when it is expired or no longer needed. Consult your pharmacist or local waste disposal company.

**Interactions** Drug interactions may change how your medications work or increase your risk for serious side effects. This document does not contain all possible drug interactions. Keep a list of all the products you use (including prescription/nonprescription drugs and herbal products) and share it with your doctor and pharmacist. Do not start, stop, or change the dosage of any medicines without your doctor's approval.

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## Side Effects

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## Uses

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## Interactions

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## Other Details

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