

# METHYLCELLULOSE

**Brand name** Celevac

**Used in the following combined preparations** None

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Methylcellulose is a laxative used for the treatment of constipation, diverticular disease, and irritable bowel syndrome. Taken by mouth, methylcellulose is not absorbed into the bloodstream but remains in the intestine. It absorbs up to 25 times its volume of water, thereby softening faeces and increasing their volume. It is also used to reduce the frequency and increase the firmness of

faeces in chronic watery diarrhoea, and to control the consistency of faeces after colostomies and ileostomies.

Methylcellulose preparations are also used with appropriate dieting in some cases of obesity. The bulking agent swells to give a feeling of fullness, thereby encouraging adherence to a reducing diet.

## QUICK REFERENCE

**Drug group** Laxative (p.69) and antidiarrhoeal drug (p.68)

**Overdose danger rating** Low

**Dependence rating** Low

**Prescription needed** No

**Available as generic** No

## INFORMATION FOR USERS

**Follow instructions on the label. Call your doctor if symptoms worsen.**

### How taken/used



Tablets.

### Frequency and timing of doses

1–2 x daily. If used as laxative, unless otherwise instructed, break in mouth and swallow with full glass of water; do not take at bedtime.

### Adult dosage range

1.5–6g daily.

### Onset of effect

Within 24 hours.

### Duration of action

Up to 3 days.

### Diet advice

If taken as a laxative, drink plenty of fluids, and drink at least 300ml with each dose. If taken for diarrhoea, avoid liquids for 30 minutes before and after each dose.

### Storage

Keep in original container at room temperature out of the reach of children.

### Missed dose

Take as soon as you remember. Take the next dose as scheduled.

### Stopping the drug

Can be safely stopped as soon as you no longer need it.

### Exceeding the dose

An occasional unintentional extra dose is unlikely to be a cause for concern. But if you notice any unusual symptoms, or if a large overdose has been taken, notify your doctor.

## SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

**Be sure to consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking this drug if:**

- You have severe constipation and/or abdominal pain.
- You have unexplained rectal bleeding.
- You have difficulty in swallowing.
- You vomit readily.
- You are taking other medicines.



### Pregnancy

No evidence of risk to developing baby, but discuss with your doctor.



### Breast-feeding

No evidence of risk.



### Infants and children

Reduced dose necessary, but discuss with your doctor.



### Over 60

No special problems.



### Driving and hazardous work

No known problems.



### Alcohol

No known problems.

## POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS

When taken by mouth, the drug may cause bloating and excess wind. Insufficient fluid intake may cause blockage of the oesophagus (gullet) or intestine. Consult your doctor if you

experience severe abdominal pain or if you have no bowel movement for 2 days after taking methylcellulose.

Symptom/effect	Frequency		Discuss with doctor		Stop taking drug now	Call doctor now
	Common	Rare	Only if severe	In all cases		
Abdominal distension		●	●			
Flatulence		●	●			
Abdominal pain		●		●		

## INTERACTIONS

None.

## PROLONGED USE

No problems expected.