



## Polyethylene Glycol

### [Polly with Antifreeze](#)

Polyethylene glycol (PEG) binds to water and keeps it inside the gut lumen. It is often used as a laxative in preparation for colonoscopy with a "two-day" or "one-day" dosing regimen. Preparation for colon surgery and barium X-ray examinations may also use PEG. It is indicated for fecal impaction in adults if the stool is located higher up in the gut and manual disimpaction and enemas fail to pass stool.

## Sorbitol

### [Sorbet](#)

Sorbitol is a poorly absorbed sugar alcohol with a hyperosmolar effect that can induce bowel movement and water retention in the gut lumen. Some fruits, such as pear and apple, contain sorbitol that can be used as a lifestyle approach to treat constipation.

## Lactulose

### [bLack-tulip](#)

Lactulose is a poorly absorbed, synthetic disaccharide. It is formed from galactose and fructose. Lactulose has a longer onset time (24-72 hours) compared to other osmotic laxatives. Another use for lactulose is in hepatic encephalopathy. It works by reducing the absorption and production of ammonia to decrease ammonia levels in the central nervous system.

## Side Effects

### Diarrhea

#### [Toilet](#)

Diarrhea is the intended effect for osmotic laxatives. However, it can be classified as an adverse event if it causes significant dehydration or hypovolemia.

### Dehydration

#### [Empty-canteen](#)

Dehydration can present with light-headedness, thirst, decreased urination, dry mouth, and weakness. In excessive diarrhea, electrolyte abnormalities can also occur.

## Considerations

### Misused in Bulimia Nervosa

#### [Abused by Bulimia-bully](#)

Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder in which patients eat excessively and try to purge it out in several ways, including using laxatives. Laxative abuse is reported in about 14.9% of bulimia nervosa patients, a 3-fold increase over the general population use.