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# Senna

**Generic name:** senna [ *SEN-nah* ]

**Brand names:** [Black Draught](#), [Dr Caldwell Laxative](#), [Ex-Lax Chocolated](#), [Fletchers Castoria](#), [Geri-kot](#), ... [show all 35 brands](#)

**Dosage forms:** oral liquid (33.3 mg/mL), oral syrup (8.8 mg/5 mL; leaf extract 176 mg/5 mL), oral tablet (15 mg; 17 mg; 17.2 mg; 25 mg; 600 mg; 8.6 mg), ... [show all 4 dosage forms](#)

**Drug class:** [Laxatives](#)

Medically reviewed by [Melisa Puckey, BPharm](#). Last updated on Mar 1, 2024.

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## What is senna?

[Senna](#) is also known as Cassia, Fan Xie Ye, Alejandrina, Séné, Sennae, and Tinnevelly.

Senna is likely effective in alternative medicine as an aid in treating occasional [constipation](#) in adults and children at least 2 years old. It is sometimes used together with another laxative or stool softener such as [lactulose](#), [psyllium](#), [docusate](#), or [mineral oil](#).

Senna is possibly effective as a [bowel preparation](#) before [colonoscopy](#).

Other uses not proven with research include [weight loss](#), [irritable bowel syndrome](#), [hemorrhoids](#), anal fissures (tears in the lining of the anus), or after anal or rectal surgery.

It is not certain whether senna is effective in treating any medical condition. Medicinal use of this product has not been approved by the FDA. Senna should not be used in place of medication prescribed for you by your doctor.

Senna is often sold as an herbal supplement. There are no regulated manufacturing standards in place for many herbal compounds and some marketed supplements have been found to be contaminated with toxic metals or other drugs. Herbal/health supplements should be purchased from a reliable source to minimize the risk of contamination.

## Warnings

Not all uses for senna have been approved by the FDA. Senna should not be used in place of medication prescribed for you by your doctor.

Senna is often sold as an herbal supplement. There are no regulated manufacturing standards in place for many herbal compounds and some marketed supplements have been found to be contaminated with toxic metals or other drugs. Herbal/health supplements should be purchased from a reliable source to minimize the risk of contamination.

Use senna as directed on the label, or as your healthcare provider has prescribed. Do not use this product in larger

amounts or for longer than recommended.

Call your healthcare provider if your symptoms do not improve, or if they get worse while using senna. Do not use this product for longer than 1 week without the advice of a healthcare provider.

## Before taking this medicine

You should not use senna if you are allergic to it, or if you have:

- [diarrhea](#) or loose stools;
- severe stomach pain;
- swelling or a blockage in your digestive tract (stomach or intestines);
- [Crohn's disease](#), [ulcerative colitis](#), appendicitis;
- hemorrhoids, anal prolapse; or
- if you are dehydrated.

Ask a doctor, pharmacist, or other healthcare provider if it is safe for you to use this product if you have ever had:

- an electrolyte imbalance (such as low levels of potassium in your blood);
- any change in bowel habits that has lasted longer than 2 weeks;
- long-term bowel problems;
- heart disease; or
- stomach pain, [nausea](#), or [vomiting](#).

**Ask a doctor before using senna if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.**

Some forms of senna are made for use by children. Do not give any herbal/health supplement to a child without the advice of a doctor.

 [Senna pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

## How should I take senna?

When considering the use of herbal supplements, seek the advice of your doctor. You may also consider consulting a practitioner who is trained in the use of herbal/health supplements.

If you choose to use senna, use it as directed on the package or as directed by your doctor, pharmacist, or other healthcare provider. Do not use more of this product than is recommended on the label.

You must chew the chewable tablet before you swallow it.

Measure liquid medicine carefully. Use the dosing syringe provided, or use a medicine dose-measuring device (not a kitchen spoon).

Senna should produce a bowel movement within 6 to 12 hours after you take it.

Do not use different formulations (such as tablets and liquid) at the same time without medical advice. Using different

formulations together increases the risk of an overdose of senna.

Senna may be unsafe when taken long-term or in high doses. Using this medicine for longer than 2 weeks may cause your bowels to stop functioning normally. Long-term use may also cause a serious electrolyte imbalance. Certain electrolyte imbalances can cause muscle weakness, heart problems, liver damage, and other harmful effects.

Call your healthcare provider if your constipation does not improve after 1 week of use, or if your constipation gets worse.

Store at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

 [Detailed Senna dosage information](#)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not use extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

## What should I avoid while taking senna?

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions about any restrictions on food, beverages, or activity.

## Senna side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to senna**: [hives](#); difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Stop using senna and call your doctor at once if you have:

- rectal bleeding;
- no bowel movement within 12 hours after using senna; or
- **low potassium level** - leg cramps, constipation, irregular heartbeats, fluttering in your chest, increased thirst or urination, numbness or tingling, muscle weakness or limp feeling.

Constipation is the most common side effect of senna. Less serious side effects may be more likely, and you may have none at all.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Senna side effects](#) (more detail)

## Related/similar drugs

## MiraLAX

MiraLAX (polyethylene glycol) is used as a laxative to treat occasional constipation or irregular ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.2 / 10

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## Colace

Colace makes bowel movements softer and is used to treat or prevent constipation. Includes Colace ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.3 / 10

[18 Reviews](#)

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## Repatha

Repatha (evolocumab) is a PCSK9 inhibitor used to lower high cholesterol alongside dietary changes ...

### Reviews & ratings

5.3 / 10

[685 Reviews](#)

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## Linzess

Linzess (linaclotide) is used to treat chronic idiopathic constipation, irritable bowel syndrome ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.7 / 10

[884 Reviews](#)

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## Dulcolax

Dulcolax (bisacodyl) is a laxative used

to treat constipation. Includes Dulcolax  
side effects ...

### Reviews & ratings

5.3 / 10

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## Sutab

Sutab (sodium sulfate, magnesium sulfate, and potassium chloride) is used for colonoscopy ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.3 / 10

[126 Reviews](#)

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## What other drugs will affect senna?

Do not take senna without medical advice if you are using any of the following medications:

- [birth control pills](#) or hormone replacement therapy;
- [digoxin \(Lanoxin\)](#);
- a diuretic (water pill); or
- [warfarin \(Coumadin, Jantoven\)](#).

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with senna, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Not all possible drug interactions are listed here.

 [Senna drug interactions](#) (more detail)

## Does senna interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

+

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## Popular FAQ

Which drugs cause opioid-induced constipation?



## More about senna

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- [Side effects](#)
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- [During pregnancy](#)
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- [Breastfeeding](#)

## Patient resources

- [Sennosides Capsules and Tablets patient information](#)
- [Sennosides Chewable Tablets](#)
- [Sennosides Liquid and Syrup](#)

## Other brands

[Senokot](#), [Senexon](#), [Ex-Lax](#), [Correctol Herbal Tea Laxative](#), ... +5 more

## Professional resources

- [Senna monograph](#)
- [Senna \(Advanced Reading\)](#)

## Related treatment guides

- [Constipation](#)
- [Bowel Preparation](#)

## Further information

- Consult with a licensed healthcare professional before using any herbal/health supplement. Whether you are treated by a medical doctor or a practitioner trained in the use of natural medicines/supplements, make sure all your healthcare providers know about all of your medical conditions and treatments.


Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use senna only for the indication prescribed.


Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

### [Medical Disclaimer](#)

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## DRUG STATUS

**Availability**  
 Rx and/or OTC

**Pregnancy & Lactation**  
 Risk data available

**CSA Schedule\***  
N/A Not a controlled drug



## User Reviews & Ratings

5.3 / 10

[308 Reviews](#)

## Images

[Sennosides 25 mg \(TCL 083\)](#)



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