

Going home with an iron supplement (sodium feredetate)

Information for children, families and carers

We have given you this factsheet because we have prescribed your baby a medicine called sodium feredetate. It explains what sodium feredetate is, how it works and what the potential side effects are. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is sodium feredetate?

Sodium feredetate is a medicine that contains lots of iron to help prevent anaemia (a condition in which you don't have enough red blood cells or haemoglobin to meet your body's needs).

Why does my baby need this medicine?

We have prescribed your baby sodium feredetate because they were born prematurely. Babies who are born at less than 36 weeks are at risk of getting anaemia, as they are not able to get enough iron from their diet (breast milk or formula milk). If your baby has too little iron, their body will not be able to make enough haemoglobin (a protein needed to carry oxygen in the blood), and they may become anaemic. Anaemia can affect your baby's growth and development. By giving your baby sodium feredetate, you can help prevent anaemia from developing.

Are there any side effects?

Sodium feredetate can cause:

- your baby's stools (poo) to look darker than usual (this is nothing to worry about)
- stomach irritation, loose bowel movements or constipation (however, sodium feredetate is less likely to cause stomach upset than other iron-containing medicines)
- your baby to 'gag' due to the taste (if this happens, please speak to your health visitor, GP or the neonatal team at your baby's next appointment)

If you are worried that your baby is experiencing any side effects, please speak to your GP. A lower dose or a different iron-containing medicine may be able to be used instead.

When should I start to give my baby sodium feredetate?

Sodium feredetate is usually started when your baby is 14 days old.

How often should I give my baby sodium feredetate?

You should give your baby sodium feredetate once a day. Try to give the medicine about the same time each day, so it becomes part of your baby's routine.

How much sodium feredetate should I give my baby?

The amount of sodium feredetate your baby needs depend on how much they weighed at birth and what kind of milk they are having. Most babies need 0.5ml of sodium feredetate each day, but some breastfed babies who were very small at birth need 1ml. When you go home from hospital, you will be told the correct dose for your baby and it will be written on the medication packaging. If your baby is having Nutriprem 2, they do not need sodium feredetate because that formula has extra iron in it.

How should I store sodium feredetate?

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard away from heat and direct sunlight, and out of the sight and reach of children.
- Dispose of the medicine bottle and any remaining contents three months after opening it. It's a good idea to make a note of the date you first opened it.
- Make sure the medicine has not reached its 'best before' or 'use by' date.

What should I do if my baby is sick (vomits)?

Wait until the next dose of sodium feredetate is due and give the normal amount. Do not give your baby a second or double dose.

What if I accidentally give my baby too much sodium feredetate?

Contact your GP immediately or take your baby to your nearest emergency department if you think you have given your baby too much medicine. Never give your baby a higher dose than has been prescribed, as it can be dangerous.

How do I get more sodium feredetate?

We will give you a bottle of sodium feredetate when you and your baby leave hospital. Once you are home, you will need to contact your GP for a repeat prescription.

How long will my baby need to take sodium feredetate for?

Your baby will need sodium feredetate until they are one year old.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Neonatal community outreach team (NCOT)

Telephone: **07766 994816** (Monday to Saturday, 7.30am to 4.30pm)

If we're unable to answer your call, please leave a message on the answer machine with your name, hospital number and a brief reason for your call. We will return your call as soon as possible.

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