This leaflet is for parents and carers about how to use this medicine in children. Our information sometimes differs from that provided by the manufacturers, because their information is usually aimed at adults. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Name of drug
Glycerin (glycerol) suppositories

Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?
When a child is constipated, their stools (poo) are hard and painful to pass. Sometimes a child may try to hold the stool in because of previous pain when going to the toilet. Constipation can also make the child feel quite poorly. Glycerin suppositories are used to trigger emptying of the bowels and provide rapid relief from constipation.

What is glycerin available as?
Suppositories: 1 g, 2 g, 4 g

When should I give glycerin suppositories?
Your doctor will tell you when to use the suppositories.

How much should I give?
Your doctor will decide which size glycerin suppository (the dose) is right for your child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.

> It is important that you follow your doctor’s instructions about how much to give.

How should I give glycerin suppositories?

> Suppositories are administered through the anus into the rectum. They must not be taken by mouth.

- Ideally your child should open their bowels (do a poo) before you administer glycerin suppositories.
- Wash your hands with soap and hot water.
- Your child should be lying on his or her side or front.
- Hold one buttock gently to one side so that you can see the back passage.
- Unwrap the suppository and hold it with the rounded end close to the back passage.
- Use one finger to push the suppository gently into the back passage. It needs to go in by about 2 cm.
- You can use lubricating gel to make insertion more comfortable.
- Your child should stay lying on their side for about 15 minutes, and ideally for an hour, to allow the suppository to spread further inside the bowel so that the suppository doesn’t come out.
- Wash your hands again with soap and hot water.

When should the medicine start working?
Glycerin suppositories usually work after about 15 minutes. If your child does not empty their bowels (do a poo), do not insert another suppository. Contact your doctor for advice, in case this is because of a problem other than constipation.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?
You do not need to worry if your child is sick, as the suppository will still work.

What if I give too much?
If you are concerned that you may have used too much, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet). Have the medicine or packaging with you if you telephone for advice.

Are there any possible side-effects?
We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they have other effects that we don’t want (side-effects).

- Glycerin suppositories may cause stomach cramps. There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor. You can report any suspected side-effects to a UK safety scheme at www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard

Can other medicines be given at the same time as glycerin suppositories?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have used, or are using, any other medicines to treat your child’s constipation.

Is there anything else I need to know about glycerin suppositories?

- Glycerin suppositories are only used to provide rapid relief from temporary constipation. They should not be used to treat chronic (long-term) constipation (unless recommended by your doctor).
• Glycerin belongs to a group of drugs called stimulant laxatives. Before giving glycerin, always increase the amount of high-fibre foods (see below) that your child eats and encourage them to drink plenty of water, or use an ‘osmotic laxative’. This is another type of laxative that works by softening the stools.

• If you think someone else may have used the glycerin suppositories by accident, particularly if they have other health problems, contact your doctor for advice, although they are unlikely to be harmed.

• You can help your child’s constipation by giving them high-fibre foods such as fruit, vegetables, bran and high-fibre cereals to eat. Also encourage them to drink plenty of water, which will help to soften the stools. Encouraging them to be active will also help their constipation. Your pharmacist, doctor or health visitor will be able to give you advice and support.

General advice about medicines

• Only give this medicine to your child. Never give it to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.

• Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.

• Make sure that the medicine you have at home has not reached the ‘best before’ or ‘use by’ date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

Where should I keep this medicine?

• Keep the medicine in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight. It does not need to be kept in the fridge.

• Make sure that children cannot see or reach the medicine.

• Keep the medicine in the container it came in.

Who to contact for more information

Your child’s doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about glycerin suppositories and about other medicines used to treat constipation.

You can also get useful information from:

England: NHS 111
Tel 111
www.nhs.uk

Scotland: NHS 24
Tel 111
www.nhs24.scot

Wales: NHS Direct
Tel 0845 46 47 (2p per minute) or 111 (free)
www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland: NI Direct
www.nidirect.gov.uk

ERIC: The Children’s Bowel & Bladder Charity
Helpline 0808 169 9949
www.eric.org.uk

NHS: Guide to constipation in young children
www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby,constipation-and-soiling