Sulfasalazine

Azulfidine® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?
- Sulfasalazine is a sulfa drug that is used to treat bowel disorders where inflammation is the cause.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?
- Sulfasalazine is a sulfa and may cause allergic reactions in pets and owners who are allergic to sulfa drugs.
- Sulfasalazine contains an aspirin-like substance. It may cause allergies in pets and owners who are allergic to aspirin. Since aspirin can be very toxic to cats, this drug should be monitored very carefully when used in cats.
- Sulfas should not be used in animals that are dehydrated as stone formation may occur in the kidneys. Always make sure that your pet has plenty of fresh, clean drinking water while on sulfa drugs.
- Sulfas drugs can cause a decrease in tear production in dogs (dry-eye) and should probably not be used in dogs that already have dry-eye. It should also be used with caution in breeds that are pre-disposed to dry-eye.
- This drug has not been shown to cause birth defects but should be used carefully in pregnancy and probably not at all in the first trimester of pregnancy.
- Sulfas drugs can cause anemia and should not be used in animals that currently have or have had anemia.
- Sulfasalazine may reduce sperm count and should be used with caution in males that are intended for breeding.
- Sulfasalazine is removed from the body by the liver and the kidneys and should not be used in animals that have liver or kidney disease.
- If your animal has any of the above conditions, talk to your veterinarian about the potential risks of using the medication versus the benefits that it might have.

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?
- Some dogs will develop dry-eye from sulfa drugs. If you notice your dog squinting, blinking more, rubbing its eyes, or notice that it has more eye discharge than usual, you should contact your veterinarian immediately.
- Many cats will develop loss of appetite and vomiting from sulfasalazine.
- Trimethoprim and sulfa drugs can suppress the bone marrow and cause anemia. If you notice fever (103-105°F) for unusual tiredness in your dog or cat, you should contact your veterinarian. These drugs should probably not be used if your animal has a history of severe anemia.
- Sulfas drugs may rarely cause a severe skin condition that can cause significant loss of skin. If you notice unusual itching or any skin inflammation while your pet is taking sulfa drugs, you should contact your veterinarian immediately.
- Sulfas should not be used in animals that are dehydrated as stone formation may occur in the kidneys. Always make sure that your pet has plenty of fresh, clean drinking water while on sulfa drugs.

How Should It Be Given?
- Sulfasalazine should be given with food orally up to three times daily. Your veterinarian may gradually increase the dose until the diarrhea resolves. Once stools are normal, the dose may gradually be decreased to the lowest effective dose.
- The successful outcome of your animal's treatment with this medication depends upon your commitment and ability to administer it exactly as the veterinarian has prescribed. Please do not skip doses or stop giving the medication. If you have difficulty giving doses consult your veterinarian or pharmacist who can offer administration techniques or change the dosage form to a type of medication that may be more acceptable to you and your animal.
- If you miss a dose of this medication you should give it as soon as you remember it, but if it is within a few hours of the regularly scheduled dose, wait and give it at the regular time. Do not double a dose as this can be toxic to your pet.
- Some other drugs can interact with this medication so tell your veterinarian about any drugs or foods that you currently give your animal. Do not give new foods or medications without first asking your veterinarian.
- Dogs and Cats: Dogs usually receive sulfasalazine two to three times daily while cats receive it once daily. Dosage may be adjusted downward to the lowest effective dose once the diarrhea goes away.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?
- Sulfasalazine should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets.