

## Appendix 3. Medicines that can cause diarrhoea

[2025 expert review: retained with updated text.]

Diarrhoea is a common adverse drug reaction (ADR) with many medicines. Antimicrobials account for about 25% of drug-induced diarrhoea though most cases are benign (Lee, 2006).

While diarrhoea has been seen with most medicines, the ones that are most commonly implicated are:

- anti-arrhythmic drugs
- anti-hypertensive agents
- antimicrobials
- bile salts
- colchicine
- cytotoxics
- gold preparations
- hypoglycaemic agents, including metformin, acarbose, gliptins
- iron preparations
- laxatives
- leflunomide
- magnesium preparations, such as antacids
- metoclopramide
- misoprostol
- non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin, ibuprofen
- olsalazine
- orlistat
- proton pump inhibitors
- theophylline

Alternative diagnoses for the diarrhoea are important; therefore, careful attention should be paid to the temporal relationship between the time that the medicine is first taken and when the diarrhoea first appears.

Further information on adverse effects is available from local medicines information centres or by using the 'search by section' facility of the [electronic medicines compendium](#).