

## There Are Multiple Concentrations of Milk of Magnesia (MOM)

### What is it?

**Milk of Magnesia (MOM – magnesium hydroxide)** is an over-the-counter medication that can be used to treat constipation and acid indigestion. MOM relieves constipation by promoting water retention in the intestines, which increases peristalsis (wave-like contractions that propel GI contents through the intestines) and stimulates bowel evacuation. MOM also improves acid indigestion by reducing the amount of stomach acid.

### Why do we need it?

Milk of Magnesia is a commonly used medication for older adults, especially those in long term care communities.

- Constipation is common in adults older than 60 years, and symptoms occur in up to 50% of residents.
- Management of constipation in older adults:
- Initial management should include lifestyle modifications (increase fiber, fluid intake, scheduled toileting)
  - Initial pharmacological treatment should be an osmotic laxative (MOM, lactulose, Miralax, etc.)

MOM is packaged in multiple concentrations. **Administration of the incorrect concentration may lead to resident receiving too small or too large of a dose.** Too small of a dose and the resident's constipation will not be resolved. Too large of a dose and the patient may develop severe diarrhea and dehydration.

### Dosing and Available Concentrations

- The indicated dosage of MOM for occasional constipation is 2,400mg to 4,800mg once daily at bedtime or in divided doses
- All doses should be followed by 8 ounces of water

### Available Concentrations:

Product	Concentration	Indicated Volume/Day
Magnesium Hydroxide	400 mg/5mL	30 to 60 mL/day
Magnesium Hydroxide	1,200 mg/5mL	5 to 10 mL/day
Milk of Magnesia Concentrate	2,400 mg/10mL	5 to 10 mL/day

### How to avoid patient harm and/or survey citations

- ALWAYS verify the concentration and that the dose prepared matches the prescriber order
- ALWAYS administer at bedtime or in divided doses, unless otherwise directed by prescriber
- ALWAYS follow each dose with 8 ounces of water

### Sources

- Lexicomp Monograph: Magnesium Hydroxide
- Mounsey A, Raleigh M, Wilson A. Management of Constipation in Older Adults. Am Fam Physician. 2015 Sep 15;92(6):500-4. PMID: 26371734.