Kayexalate® (sodium polystyrene sulfonate) – Drug Safety Communication

- On October 22, 2015, the FDA announced that it is requiring the manufacturer of Kayexalate (sodium polystyrene sulfonate) to conduct studies to investigate Kayexalate’s potential to bind to other oral medications.

- Kayexalate is indicated for the treatment of hyperkalemia.
  - Sodium polystyrene sulfonate is also generically available. Kionex® and SPS® are branded generics.

- This safety communication was prompted by the FDA’s review of another potassium-lowering drug, Veltassa (patiromer). The FDA discovered that Veltassa bound to about half of the medications tested, some of which are commonly used in patients who require potassium-lowering drugs.
  - Similar to Veltassa, Kayexalate may also bind to other oral medications, which could decrease the effects of these medications.
  - Currently, the approved label for Kayexalate describes its potential to decrease absorption of lithium and thyroxine; however, extensive drug-drug interaction studies with Kayexalate have not been performed.

- Patients should not stop taking their potassium-lowering drugs without talking to their healthcare provider. However, to reduce the risk of binding, prescribers and patients should consider separating the dose of Kayexalate from other oral medications by at least 6 hours. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter medications.

- Healthcare providers should monitor blood levels or clinical response to other medications when appropriate.

- If the studies conducted by the Kayexalate manufacturer, Concordia Pharmaceuticals, confirm significant interactions with other medications, the FDA will require all manufacturers of sodium polystyrene sulfonate products to update the drug labels to include information about these drug interactions.

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