

# Phenolphthalein

## Pharmacology and Biochemistry

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### 1. Pharmacology

Phenolphthalein is an organic compound used as a laboratory reagent and pH indicator. Phenolphthalein exerts laxative effects by stimulating the intestinal mucosa and constricting smooth muscles. However, phenolphthalein is no longer used as a laxative due to the suspected carcinogenicity of this compound.

*from NCIt*

### 2. MeSH Pharmacological Classification

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#### [Indicators and Reagents](#)

Substances used for the detection, identification, analysis, etc. of chemical, biological, or pathologic processes or conditions. Indicators are substances that change in physical appearance, e.g., color, at or approaching the endpoint of a chemical titration, e.g., on the passage between acidity and alkalinity.

Reagents are substances used for the detection or determination of another substance by chemical or microscopical means, especially analysis. Types of reagents are precipitants, solvents, oxidizers, reducers, fluxes, and colorimetric reagents. (From Grant and Hackh's Chemical Dictionary, 5th ed, p301, p499)

[See a list of PubChem compounds matching this category.](#)

*from MeSH*

### 3. ATC Code

[A06AB04](#) - Phenolphthalein < A06AB - Contact laxatives < A06A - Drugs for constipation < A06 - Drugs for constipation < A - Alimentary tract and metabolism

*from WHO ATC*

### 4. Absorption, Distribution and Excretion

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Up to 15% of therapeutic dose of phenolphthalein is absorbed and eliminated by kidney, most of it in conjugated form.

*Ellenhorn, M.J., S. Schonwald, G. Ordog, J. Wasserberger. Ellenhorn's Medical Toxicology: Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Poisoning. 2nd ed. Baltimore, MD: Williams and Wilkins, 1997., p. 1011*