PIPADOR REVISION

MRCOG Part 1 Revision Notes

GI Drugs

PHARMACOLOGY • LECTURE 385

VISUAL EXAMINATION REVISION NOTES

2026 Edition

385

MRCOG PART 1 REVISION NOTES | PHARMACOLOGY

GI Drugs

Antacids, H_2 antagonists, PPIs, laxatives and antidiarrhoeals, pregnancy use and aspiration prophylaxis

Alginates	PPIs	Ranitidine	Bulk-forming
First line reflux in pregnancy	H^+/K^+-ATPase	Withdrawn (2020)	First-line laxative

■ KEY FACTS: Learning objectives

- Describe the mechanisms of antacids, H_2 antagonists, PPIs, laxatives and antidiarrhoeals.
- Describe management of reflux, constipation and diarrhoea in pregnancy.
- Describe aspiration prophylaxis in obstetrics.

385.1 Drug classes

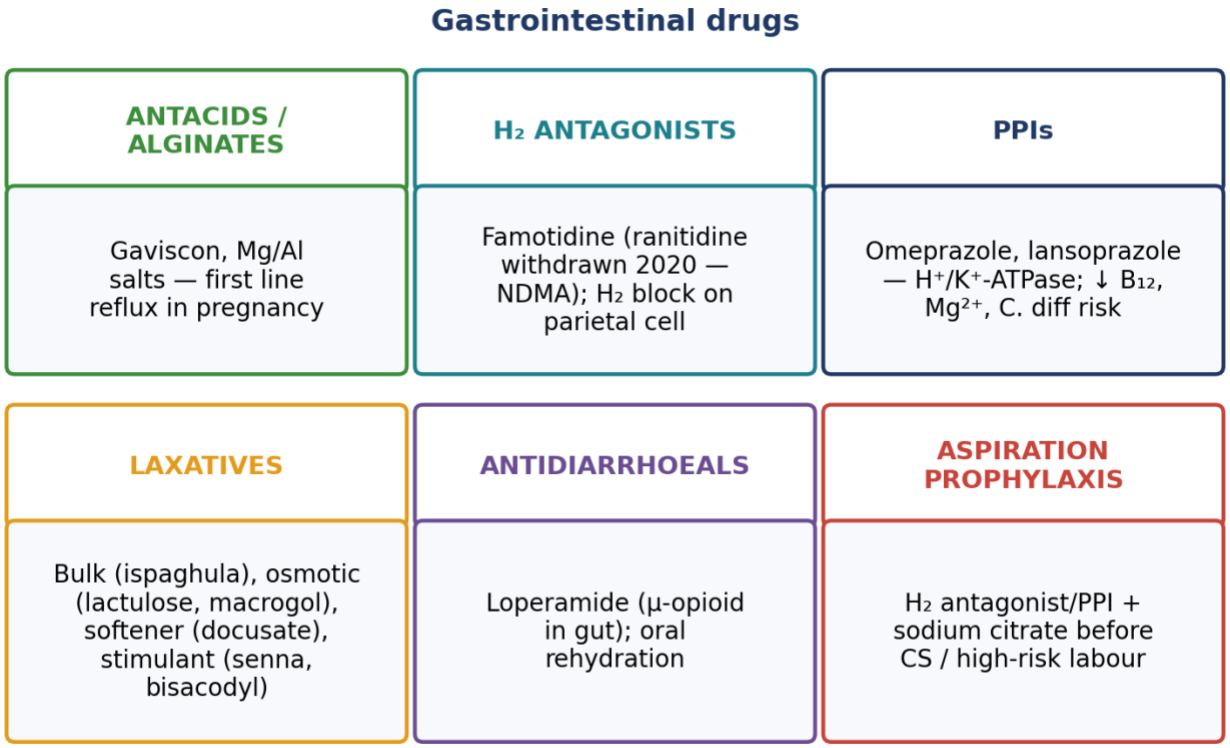


Figure 385.1 — Gastrointestinal drugs

Drug class	Mechanism / adverse effects
Antacids	• Neutralise acid • Mg salts → diarrhoea, Al salts → constipation • Chelate iron/levothyroxine (separate doses)
Alginates	Form a raft over gastric contents

Drug class	Mechanism / adverse effects
H_2 antagonists	Block parietal-cell H_2 receptors → ↓ acid (famotidine; ranitidine withdrawn due to NDMA contamination)
PPIs	• Irreversibly inhibit H^+/K^+-ATPase → most potent acid suppression • Long-term: ↓ Mg^{2+}, B_{12}, fractures, C. difficile
Laxatives	Bulk (fibre), osmotic (lactulose, macrogol), stimulant (senna — contractions), softeners
Loperamide	Peripheral μ-opioid agonist ↓ motility
Antispasmodics	Mebeverine, hyoscine butylbromide (IBS, colic)

385.2 Pregnancy

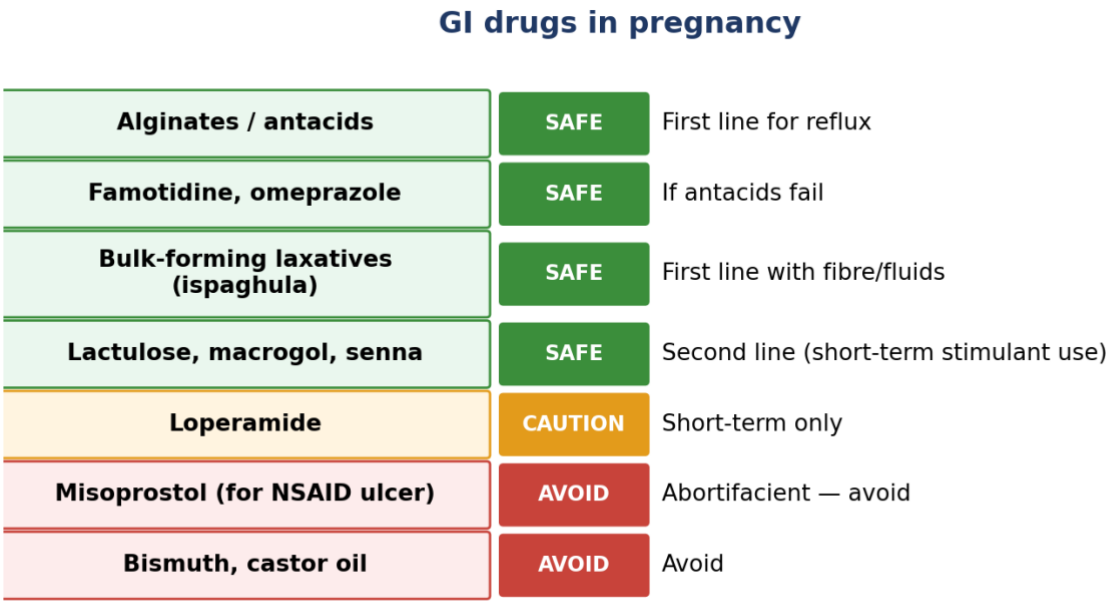


Figure 385.2 — GI drugs in pregnancy

- Reflux in pregnancy (progesterone relaxes LOS, pressure from uterus): lifestyle → antacids/alginates → famotidine or omeprazole.
- Constipation (progesterone ↓ motility, iron): fibre/fluids → bulk-forming → lactulose/macrogol → short-term senna.
- **Aspiration prophylaxis** (Mendelson's syndrome): H_2 antagonist/PPI ± metoclopramide and **sodium citrate 0.3 M 30 mL** before GA for CS
  - H_2 antagonist in labour for high-risk women.

385.3 Must-know summary

■ EXAM TIP

- Alginates/antacids first; H_2 antagonists (famotidine) and PPIs (omeprazole) safe if needed.
- Ranitidine withdrawn (NDMA).
- Laxatives: bulk → osmotic → short-term stimulant.
- Aspiration prophylaxis: H_2 blocker/PPI + sodium citrate before GA CS.

■ MNEMONIC / MEMORY AID

Reflux ladder — 'Lifestyle, Liquid (alginate), Lower acid (H_2/PPI)'.