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Lactulose

National Cancer Institute

Source

National Cancer Institute. *Lactulose*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C29148.

A disaccharide (sugar) synthesized from fructose and galactose, Lactulose is used to treat constipation and some liver diseases. Nondigestible in mammals, lactulose passes unabsorbed down to the large intestine where resident bacteria consume it and produce lactic, acetic, and formic acids, which draw fluid into the bowel to soften the stool (laxative effect). Acidification of the colon contents attracts ammonia from the bloodstream, assisting stool excretion; helpful in liver failure when ammonia cannot be detoxified. (NCI04)