

About your medication

CYCLOSPORIN

(NEORAL®
10 mg, 25 mg, 50 mg, 100 mg capsules
and 100 mg/mL mixture)

Other brands are available but should not be interchanged

WHAT IS CYCLOSPORIN?

Cyclosporin is from a group of medications called immunosuppressive agents. It is only available with a doctor's prescription.

WHAT IS IT FOR?

It is used to reduce the body's natural immunity or defence system in patients who have received transplants, as well as in autoimmune conditions such as nephrotic syndrome, atopic dermatitis and rheumatoid arthritis. Cyclosporin prevents the blood's white cells from attacking the transplanted organ or bone marrow cells or body's own cells.

HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICINE

It is important that this medication is taken only as directed and not given to other people.

Cyclosporin should be taken about the same time each day to keep a constant amount in the blood. The same brand should always be used.

It is taken as a single daily dose or divided into two equal portions taken twelve hours apart.

Cyclosporin capsules should be swallowed whole, do not chew them. If using the mixture, always use the specially provided dropper to measure all doses. This dropper should be wiped after each dose with a clean, dry tissue and if it needs to be washed clean then make sure it is completely dry before using again.

The liquid dose can be stirred into a glass of orange juice, apple juice or soft drink just before it is taken. Make sure the dropper does not touch the liquid in the glass. Rinse the glass with more juice or soft drink to make sure that the whole dose has been taken. Do not use wax-lined or plastic containers to measure the dose. Cyclosporin may be taken with meals to avoid an upset stomach.

The doctor may require your child to have blood tests to measure the blood level of the medication. This is done to achieve the correct dose for your child and to prevent toxic effects. There may be the need for other tests.

WHAT TO DO IF A DOSE IS MISSED

If your child misses a dose of the medication it can be taken as soon as you remember. Do not take the missed dose if it is close to the next one; just take the next dose as normal. **Do not double up on any doses. If you miss more than one dose a day call your doctor.**

STORING THE MEDICINE

It is important to keep cyclosporin locked away out of the reach of children.

Do not keep the capsules in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink or in other damp, warm places because this may make them less effective. Always leave the capsules in the original foil strips.

Do not store the solution in the refrigerator. The solution should be discarded 2 months after opening. Write the date of opening the bottle on the label as a reminder.

USE OF OTHER MEDICINES

Care must be taken when using cyclosporin with some other medications. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving any prescription medicine or medicine purchased without prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket, or health food shop. This is important for

- a wide range of prescription medicines
- St John's Wort, an ingredient in many medicines that you can buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, health food shop or supermarket.

This list is not complete. Talk to your child's doctor or pharmacist about possible interactions with any over-the-counter or complementary medicines or recreational substances (e.g. alcohol)

Do not give your child any vaccinations without first checking with your doctor. In addition, other household residents should not take oral polio vaccine (SABIN) but should be given inactivated polio vaccine (IPOL) if required.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Avoid eating large amounts of foods rich in potassium e.g. bananas.
- Do not take with grapefruit juice unless advised by the doctor.
- Do not suddenly stop giving this medication. It should only be discontinued under the supervision of your doctor.
- Good dental hygiene and visiting your dentist on a regular basis can help avoid any potential gum problems like swollen or bleeding gums.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects can occur while taking cyclosporin. Some of these are not serious and will go away with time or after the dose has been changed. Others are more serious and require you to check with your doctor.

Less serious side effects include:

- nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, stomach cramps
- tiredness, lack of energy
- burning feeling in hands or feet
- excessive growth of body and facial hair
- thickened, swollen or bleeding gums
- tremor (shaking), headache
- weight loss or gain
- feeling sad
- muscle cramps, tenderness or weakness

More Serious (Contact doctor *as soon as possible* if any of the following occur):

- fever, constant 'flu-like' symptoms
- unusual bleeding or bruising on body
- new lumps, moles, changes in existing moles, skin rash or hives
- swelling of eyelids, hands or feet due to excess fluid
- change in amount of urine passed or in the number of times per day, pain on urinating
- yellowing of skin and/or eyes
- severe pain or tenderness in the stomach or abdomen
- vomiting blood or material that looks like coffee grounds; black sticky bowel motions or bloody diarrhoea
- visual hallucinations, buzzing or ringing in the ears
- seizures (fits)

Allergic reaction: (Stop medicine and see doctor immediately):

- Skin rash, itching or hives, swollen mouth or lips, wheezing or difficulty breathing

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONTACT



***Your Child's Doctor via the RCH Switchboard
on 03 9345 5522***

OR

***Pharmacy Department on 03 9345 5492
IN CASE OF POISONING OR OVERDOSE CONTACT
POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE 13 11 26
(24 hour service)***

This leaflet answers some common questions about your child's medicine. It does not contain all available information. It does not take the place of talking to your child's doctor or pharmacist. The leaflet may differ from information in the manufacturer's Consumer Medicine Information. The information in this leaflet reflects the usage of medicine under medical supervision by patients of The Royal Children's Hospital. Medicine may be used in children in different ways or for different reasons than in adults - for more information see the leaflet "[Medicines for Children](#)". This leaflet includes information current at the time of review of the document – OCTOBER 2010.