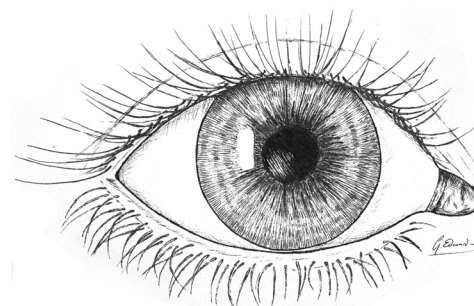


# Ciclosporin Information

Ophthalmology



## Who is this leaflet for?

This information sheet is for patients who have been informed they require immunosuppression treatment for their eye condition.

## Introduction

Ciclosporin is a drug that can help prevent your condition causing damage to your eyes. You can discuss the benefits and risks of taking Ciclosporin with your healthcare professionals before you start treatment, so that you are able to make an informed consent.

## What is it?

Ciclosporin is a type of drug which belongs to a group of medicines called "immunosuppressants". Ciclosporin is used for diseases that are called autoimmune disease. In these diseases, the body's own immune system (defence system) attacks the body's normal tissue. Ciclosporin reduces the disease activity and therefore symptoms by reducing the activity of the body's immune system (the body's own defence system) and it is always used with care.

**The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.**

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

## Why is Ciclosporin prescribed?

Your doctor has prescribed Ciclosporin for the treatment of your ocular (eye) condition. It is given to reduce the activity of your disease and can also be used to prevent inflammation within the eye. Ciclosporin will not cure your condition but will control your symptoms. Doctors may prescribe it for people on steroid treatment so that their steroid dose can be reduced.

## How and when you should take your medicine

Ciclosporin is usually taken in capsule form once or twice a day and your doctor will advise you about the correct dose. It may be taken with food or on an empty stomach, but you should be consistent (for example, always with food or always on an empty stomach).

Make sure you always have the same brand each time you get your prescription.

Ciclosporin does not work immediately, your condition may take several months to improve before you notice any benefit. In order to have an effect, it should be taken regularly as prescribed by your doctor.

Please Note: **do not** take Ciclosporin with grapefruit or grapefruit juice as this may increase the amount of cyclosporine available in the body and so increase the risk of side effects.

## What are the possible side effects?

Like all medicines, Ciclosporin can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them. Normally this treatment is tolerated well. The most common side effects you may experience are:

- Nausea, vomiting (feeling sick), which is often relieved by taking the medicine after food
- Diarrhoea
- Kidney problems
- Headache
- Gum overgrowth and swollen gums; it is important to visit your dentist regularly
- Excess hair growth
- A mild tremor and tingling which will reduce with time
- A burning sensation of the hands and feet, usually during the first few weeks of treatment

- A rise in blood pressure: this will be checked at your clinic visits so we treat your blood pressure before any problem develops
- It may also cause high cholesterol or gout
- Tiredness

## Further information regarding side-effects

This leaflet outlines essential information that you need if you have been prescribed this medicine. Not all possible side effects have been listed. We recommend that you read the package insert leaflet from the manufacturer that is supplied with your medicine for a full list of side effects (uncommon, serious and rare) and drug interactions reported for this medicine.

It is important to tell your doctor if you think you may have an increased risk of side effects or if they become troublesome or if you notice anything unusual. See your doctor immediately if any side effects and symptoms listed get worse.

You should **not** stop taking Ciclosporin unless the doctor tells you, because stopping your medicine can make your condition worse.

## What should I look out for?

Very occasionally, Ciclosporin can suppress your immune system. Your body's resistance to infection can be reduced while you are taking ciclosporin. This can make you more likely to develop infections, which may be more severe than normal. It is important to tell your doctor immediately if you have:

- A sore throat
- A fever
- Any other symptoms of infection

If you have never had chickenpox, you should avoid close contact with people who have chickenpox or shingles. If you do come into contact with people suffering from chickenpox or shingles, see your doctor urgently. You may need antiviral treatment which your doctor will be able to prescribe.

## What are the risks?

There is a slight increased risk of certain type of cancer in people using Ciclosporin. Due to the small risk of lymphoid tissue and skin cancer, you should avoid exposure to strong sunlight and protect your skin with sunblock or sun screen. Please discuss with your doctor or nurse specialist if you are worried.

## What monitoring will I need?

Ciclosporin can affect the kidneys and blood pressure. It can also sometimes cause increased levels of lipids (e.g. cholesterol) in the blood. Your doctor or nurse specialist will arrange for you to have a blood test before you start treatment and have regular blood checks while on Ciclosporin. It is very important that you have these tests performed as your treatment may be stopped unless you have regular blood tests and blood pressure checks.

Your doctor or nurse specialist will check your general condition from time to time, which may include your weight, blood pressure, blood sugar levels and urine.

## Can I take other medicines with Ciclosporin?

Due to the potential risks of drug interactions with other medications, you should discuss all your current medicines you take with your doctor before starting Ciclosporin. You should always tell any other doctor treating you that you are on Ciclosporin.

Ciclosporin is not a pain killer. If you already have pain killer you may carry on taking these as well as your Ciclosporin unless advised by your doctor.

You should **not** take "over the counter" drugs without first checking with your Doctor or pharmacist.

## Will it affect immunisation?

If you are on Ciclosporin, it is recommended that you must **not** have live vaccines. If you require any vaccinations it is important to check with your GP.

Yearly flu vaccines are safe and recommended. You should consult with your doctor before having any vaccinations.

## Can I drink alcohol while on Ciclosporin?

Excessive alcohol intake can seriously affect levels of Ciclosporin in the blood. However, it is fine to drink alcohol in moderation whilst using Ciclosporin.

Alcohol may be harmful if you have alcohol related problems, epilepsy, brain injury, liver problems or if you are pregnant or breast feeding.

Since both alcohol and steroids can upset the stomach, you should stop drinking alcohol. It is also advisable to stop or reduce smoking. It is best to discuss with your healthcare professional.

## How can I reduce the risk of infection?

You should avoid close contact with people who have recently been in hospital or people who have viral infections. Do not eat soft cheese from unpasteurised milk. Chilled food should be reheated thoroughly, and salads washed well. Visit the Food Standards Agency website [www.food.gov.uk/safereheating](http://www.food.gov.uk/safereheating) for information on reducing your risk of infection from foods.

## Does Ciclosporin affect fertility or pregnancy?

You must not take Ciclosporin during pregnancy unless clearly advised by your doctor, as there is a risk to the foetus. You should use contraception before taking, whilst taking and for up to 3 months after you have stopped taking Ciclosporin (oral contraception may not be sufficient). Men are advised not to father a child during and for up to 6 months after discontinuation of treatment. Please inform your doctor straight away if you are pregnant, or plan to start a family in the near future.

## Does it affect breastfeeding?

You should **not** breastfeed if you are on Ciclosporin. The drug may pass into the breast milk and could be harmful to your baby.

## What if you forget to take your tablets?

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose.

**Do not** take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose, but wait and take your next dose at the usual time. If you have missed more than one dose, contact your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

## General Information about your medicines

- Medicine is an important part of your treatment
- Each medicine has been individually prescribed for you and it is important that you take your medicine as your doctor has told you
- To avoid any problems, please do not stop or change any medicine without telling your doctor first
- If you feel that any problems you are having are possibly caused by your medicines, inform your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible
- Remember to contact your doctor before your prescription has run out to obtain further supplies
- Please return any unused medicines that are no longer needed to a pharmacy for safe disposal

- If you have any questions about your medicines please do not hesitate to contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse

## Additional Information

If you have any further questions or need advice about your treatment do not hesitate to consult your GP or your Eye doctor or Nurse Specialist at the Eye Department at New Cross Hospital.

## Other useful contacts

### **Eye Referral Unit**

Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm

Weekends, 8am-3pm

Tel: 01902 695805

### **Minor Procedures**

Monday-Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm

Tel: 01902 695813 or 695831

Alternatively outside these hours please attend the main Emergency Department (ED) or contact NHS Direct on 111.

Further Information on this subject, please check the following websites:

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

[www.patient.co.uk/medicine](http://www.patient.co.uk/medicine)

[www.medicines.org.uk/guides](http://www.medicines.org.uk/guides)

[www.food.gov.uk/safeheating](http://www.food.gov.uk/safeheating)

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。