

# Cyclosporine Information for Nephrotic Syndrome

Cyclosporine is a medicine that calms down an overactive immune system. Doctors think that the immune system has something to do with the cause of nephrotic syndrome, but we don't understand the exact details. It is also used to prevent rejection of transplanted organs, such as the kidney, heart, and liver.

## **Why is Cyclosporine used in Nephrotic Syndrome patients?**

There are medical study results that cyclosporine reduces the amount of protein in the urine and can put nephrotic syndrome into remission.

## **How should I take Cyclosporine? How is Cyclosporine given?**

Cyclosporine comes in a capsule, tablet, or liquid form. If the liquid form is taken, you should measure the correct amount using an oral syringe or medicine spoon. (You can get these from your pharmacist.) Do not use a kitchen teaspoon because you will not be able to measure out the correct amount.

Take Cyclosporine at the same time every day. Doses should be 12 hours apart. Pick times that are easy for your schedule so that you do not miss doses.

You should talk to your doctor before you stop taking this medicine or before you change the amount for any reason. Your nephrotic syndrome will come back if you stop taking it.

You may want to take Cyclosporine with some food if the medicine upsets your stomach. Try to keep the type of food and amount of food the same each day. Changes in the diet may change how Cyclosporine is absorbed.

It is VERY important that your child floss every day while taking cyclosporine. Flossing helps keep the gums from growing too big, and bleeding.

## **What are the possible side effects of Cyclosporine?**

You may experience some of these side effects while on Cyclosporine. Check with your doctor if you continue to have any of these side effects and they do not go away:

- Increased hair growth on the face or body
- Leg cramps
- Trembling or shaking of hands (tremor)
- Mild headache
- Upset stomach, vomiting (throwing up), or diarrhea (loose stools)
- Acne
- Gum growth

Call your doctor right away if you have any of these side effects:

- Bleeding, tender, or enlarged gums

- Unusual tiredness or weakness
- Frequent need to urinate
- Unexplained nervousness
- Numbness or tingling of hands, feet, or lips
- Blurry vision or changes in eyesight
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes
- Decrease in the amount of urine being made
- Skin rash

Most of the following side effects are not common, but they may be a sign of a serious problem. Call your doctor right away or go to the Emergency Department if you see any of these side effects:

- Fever, chills
- Cough or sore throat
- Blood in urine, difficulty urinating, or pain with urination
- Severe headache
- Seizures
- Confusion
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Chest pain
- Fast or irregular heartbeat
- Severe stomach pain
- Flushing of the face and neck

### **What are precautionary measures I should take while taking Cyclosporine?**

Cyclosporine lowers the body's immune system function, which increases chances of getting an infection. Watch closely for signs of infection such as a fever, chills, cough, and sore throat.

Contact your doctor right away if you notice any signs of infection.

You should not receive any immunizations (vaccines) without your doctor's approval. Some vaccines contain live viruses, and can make you very sick if you're taking cyclosporine.

You should not have grapefruits or grapefruit juice while taking cyclosporine. This may make the Cyclosporine level in your blood go up and increase the chance of having side effects.

Many other medications may change the blood levels of Cyclosporine in your body. Check with your doctor before taking any other medicines (prescription, non-prescription, herbal, or natural products).

Tell your doctor that you are taking cyclosporine before you have any operation, dental procedure, or an emergency treatment.

Cyclosporine may cause birth defects if it is taken at the time of conception or during pregnancy. If you would like to become pregnant, talk to your doctor FIRST. If you become pregnant while taking cyclosporine, stop taking it AND tell your doctor.