
Treatment Information

Ciclosporin

Ciclosporin is a drug that suppresses the immune system and is an effective treatment for inflammatory arthritis. It was originally developed for use in patients undergoing kidney transplants. It is not a painkiller and you may need to take an anti-inflammatory drug or painkiller as well as the ciclosporin. Ciclosporin is also known by the trade name **Neoral**.

The tablets

Ciclosporin capsules come in 3 strengths: 25mg, 50mg and 100mg. The dose that you will be given will depend upon your weight and the results of your blood tests. You will start with a small dose, *taken twice a day*, which will be gradually increased.

How long will it take to work?

It may take several weeks before you feel any benefit and you should continue to take your other medication as advised.

Are there any side effects?

As with all medication some people may experience side effects. Ciclosporin can raise your blood pressure and affect kidney function. Because of this, regular blood pressure checks are needed as well as blood tests to check kidney function. If you already have high blood pressure it does not mean that you cannot take ciclosporin but extra care will be taken to check your blood pressure.

Less common side effects include burning sensations in the hands and feet, nausea, swelling of the gums and fatigue.

What tests will I have?

Blood pressure: Your blood pressure will be checked every two weeks for the first three months and once a month after that. This will normally be done by the nurse at your GP practice.

Blood Tests: You will have blood tests (serum creatinine, full blood count, CRP, liver function tests, urea and electrolytes) every two weeks for the first three months and then once a month.

Problems with other drugs:

Antibiotics: Some antibiotics interfere with ciclosporin. If you need treatment with antibiotics, you should tell your doctor that you are taking ciclosporin.

Anti-inflammatory drugs: There is a potential interaction with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, although this is not a major problem. If your GP wants to change your anti-inflammatory drug, you should tell him that you are taking ciclosporin.

Grapefruit juice: You should not take your tablets with grapefruit juice.

Rheumatology department Patient Information

St John's Wort: You should not take this whilst taking ciclosporin.

Other precautions: You should see your doctor if you develop any signs of infection.

Contact Details

If you have any further questions or need advice about your treatment phone the Rheumatology Advice line on

01202 442849.

www.poole.nhs.uk/our_services/rheumatology.asp

For further health-related information, please contact:

The Health Information & Resource Centre

Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Longfleet Road

Poole

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Telephone: (01202) 448003

Rheumatology Practitioners

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We can supply this information in larger print, on audiotape, or have it translated for you. A member of staff will be happy to discuss this with you. Please call PALS on 01202 448499 or the Health Information Centre on 01202 448003 for further advice