

Ciclosporin (cyclosporin)

(Neoral[®], Cicloral[®], Sandimmun[®])

What is ciclosporin?

Ciclosporin belongs to a group of medications called immunosuppressants. It is only available with a doctor's prescription.

What is it for?

Ciclosporin is prescribed for patients who have received transplants or those who have an autoimmune condition such as nephrotic syndrome, atopic dermatitis, psoriasis or rheumatoid arthritis. It acts by preventing the blood's white cells from attacking the transplanted organ/tissue or the body's own cells.

How to take this medication

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

Ciclosporin is usually prescribed as a single daily dose or twice daily dose (divided into two equal portions taken twelve hours apart). It should be taken about the same time each day to keep a constant amount in the blood. For this reason also, the same brand should always be used.

It should be given with meals to avoid an upset stomach.

Ciclosporin capsules should be swallowed whole and not chewed. The ciclosporin liquid should always be measured with the specially provided dropper. This dropper should be wiped after each dose with a clean, dry tissue.

The liquid dose can be stirred into a glass of orange juice or apple juice 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.

Your child will require regular blood tests while on this medication. If you are concerned please discuss with your doctor.

What to do if a dose is missed

If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and give the next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, give the dose as soon as you remember and then go back to giving the medicine as usual.



Do not try to make up for missed dose(s) by giving more than one dose at a time. This can increase the risk of unwanted side effects.

Storing the medication

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

- **10mg capsules:** store below 25°C
- **25mg, 50mg, 100mg capsules:** store below 30°C

Do not keep the medicine in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink or any other damp, warm place, because this may make the medication less effective. Keep the tablets in the blister pack until it is time to give them.

The liquid should be kept at room temperature, ideally between 15-30°C. Do not refrigerate. It may become thicker or harden at low temperature. This can be safely reversed by keeping the bottle at a slightly warmer temperature. The solution should be discarded 2 months after opening. Write the date opened on the label on the bottle as a reminder.

Use of other medication

Ciclosporin can interact with a number of other medications so it is very important to advise your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medication. This includes medicines that you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Do not give your child or other household members any vaccinations without first checking with your doctor.

Important information

- 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 the dentist on a regular basis can help avoid any potential gum problems like swollen or bleeding gums.
- This medication can reduce the ability of your child's immune system to fight infections. It is important to maintain good hygiene and try to reduce the risk of infection. Seek specialist advice if your child is exposed to chicken pox or measles.
- It is important to reduce exposure to sunlight by wearing a hat, light loose clothing and apply SPF 30+ sunscreen on exposed skin areas to prevent the development of skin cancers.
- Ciclosporin should be avoided during pregnancy. Older female patients should speak to their doctor if they are planning to or suspect they may be pregnant.

Possible side-effects

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

Less serious side effects include:

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

Contact your doctor **as soon as possible** if any of the following side effects occur:

- Fever, constant "flu-like" symptoms.
- Unusual bleeding or bruising on body.
- New lumps, moles, changes in existing moles.
- 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 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, confusion, agitation, buzzing or ringing in the ears.
- Shortness of breath, skin rash, itching, swelling of face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat.

If you are worried about any of these side effects or any other effects please contact your child's doctor.

Commercially available dosage forms and strengths

- capsules in 10mg, 25mg, 50mg and 100mg
- liquid in 100mg per mL
- injection 50mg/mL in 1mL ampoules.

Your hospital pharmacy will advise you if they manufacture any additional dosage forms to the above.

If you have any concerns contact your child's doctor the PCH Pharmacy Department

- Dispensary: 6456 0190 – select option 2
- Paediatric Medicines Information Service: 6456 0190 – select option 1

In case of overdose or poisoning contact the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability.**

Child and Adolescent Health Service

15 Hospital Avenue, Nedlands, WA, 6009

Telephone: (08) 6456 0190

Produced by Pharmacy

Ref: 616 © CAHS 2017 Revised 2022

Disclaimer: This publication is for general education and information purposes.

Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed.

© State of Western Australia, Child and Adolescent Health Service

