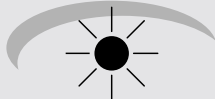
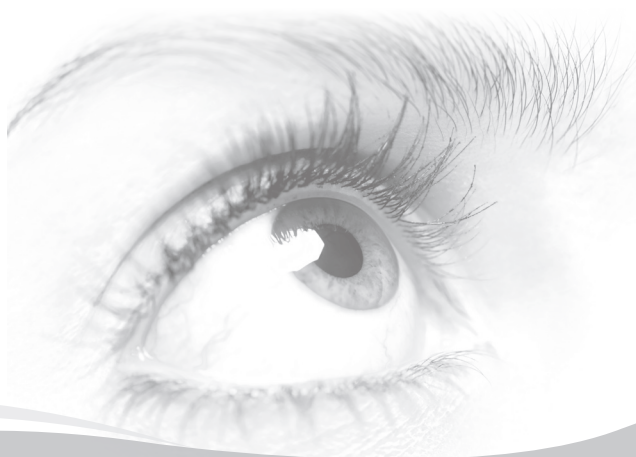


Scottish Uveitis Network



Information about ...

# Ciclosporin



Ophthalmology Service

**Scottish Uveitis National Managed Clinical Network**

## **What is ciclosporin?**

Ciclosporin is a drug used in the treatment of inflammatory conditions and to prevent rejection of organs including heart, kidney and liver, following transplantation. It reduces inflammation in these conditions. Clinical studies have shown that ciclosporin can also control inflammation within the eye.

## **When should you be careful taking ciclosporin?**

Be sure to tell your doctor if:

- You have any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- You have episodes of infection.
- If you come into contact with someone who has chicken pox or shingles, you should contact your GP or the ophthalmology department for advice.
- If you have liver or kidney disease.
- You are on any other medication.

## **Can I have vaccinations while I am on ciclosporin?**

- You should not take live vaccines while on ciclosporin.
- Pneumovax and an annual flu vaccine are recommended while on this treatment.
- Please arrange to see your general practitioner each year to discuss this.

## **How should ciclosporin be taken?**

- Always take the tablets as your Doctor directs.
- Swallow tablets whole, do not suck or chew them.
- Moderately fatty foods slow down the absorption of ciclosporin into your body. Therefore it is better to take it on an empty stomach or at least 1 hour before or 2-3 hours after a meal.
- Do not drink grapefruit juice while taking ciclosporin
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you realise. However, if you do not realise until the next day, skip the missed dose and carry on as before. Do not take double the dose.
- If you take too many tablets or someone else accidentally takes your medicine, contact your doctor, pharmacist or the nearest hospital straight away.

## **Will I need blood tests?**

- You will require blood tests weekly for a month, then fortnightly for the next 2 months, then 1-2 monthly thereafter.

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

Two major side effects are a rise in blood pressure and effects on the kidneys. However, these will be monitored at every clinic visit and dosage adjusted/ stopped if required.

Minor side effects are:

- Initially you may feel nausea after tablets, which is often relieved by taking them after food.

- General tiredness and fatigue can occur due to a lack of magnesium in the body but we can give you a supplement for this.
- Excess body hair which can be a nuisance cosmetically but is not permanent and will reduce as the dose is lowered.
- Swollen gums which can be treated with dental hygiene
- You may observe a tremor and tingling which will reduce with time.

#### Rare side effects:

- Liver damage: Blood tests taken in every clinic will check for this rare occurrence.
- Occasionally level of blood cholesterol rises which may need medication.
- Some people have an increased incidence of infections both viral and bacterial, so it is important to inform your Doctor if you feel unwell.
- ciclosporin reduces your body's defence mechanism. Because of this, there is an increased risk of developing tumors (particularly of the bone marrow)

### **Can ciclosporin be used when pregnant or breast feeding?**

- You should not take ciclosporin if you are or think you may be pregnant, as it could harm an unborn baby.
- ciclosporin should be stopped at least 6 weeks before trying for a baby.
- Men taking immunosuppressive treatments may also need to take precautions.

- Reliable contraception should be used by men and women taking ciclosporin.
- Ciclosporin should not be taken when breast feeding.

### **How long will ciclosporin take to work?**

- Ciclosporin does not work immediately. It may take up to 3-4 months before you notice any benefit.

### **May I drink alcohol while taking ciclosporin?**

- Yes there is no specific to avoid alcohol when on ciclosporin.

**If you experience problems, contact your GP or your local ophthalmology department:**

**Contact number:** \_\_\_\_\_





## **Further information**

The Scottish Uveitis National Managed Clinical Network is a nationally supported network to improve and ensure an equality of care for patients with uveitis throughout Scotland.

**[www.sun.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.sun.scot.nhs.uk)**

The Uveitis Information Group (Scotland) is a patient-led charity, based in Scotland, run by volunteers. They provide information, leaflets and fact sheets on uveitis which can be accessed via their site.

### **Uveitis Information Group**

South House, Sweening,  
Vidlein, Shetland Isles, ZE2 9QE  
Email: [info@uveitis.net](mailto:info@uveitis.net)  
Website: **[www.uveitis.net](http://www.uveitis.net)**

This leaflet has been produced by the Scottish Uveitis National Managed Clinical Network.

Approved by the Scottish Uveitis National Managed Clinical Network Steering Group. May 2012

Available on-line at: **[www.sun.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.sun.scot.nhs.uk)**

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