

PATIENT INFORMATION

Drugs for uveitis: **Mycophenolate Mofetil (MMF)**

What is it?

Mycophenolate mofetil is a drug that has been used to treat patients who have inflammation following transplant of organs such as heart, kidney and liver. Their immune cells need to be 'switched off' to stop them from attacking the donor organ. Clinical studies have shown that MMF can also prevent inflammation within the eye.

- **Take MMF exactly as directed by your doctor**
- **You will need regular blood tests while you are taking MMF. You must not take the medication unless you are having special checks**
- **Before beginning treatment, please note that this sheet does not list all the uses and side-effects associated with this drug. For full details, please see the drug information leaflet which comes with your medicine. Your doctor will assess your medical circumstances and draw your attention to any information or side-effects which may be relevant in your particular case.**

When should MMF not be used? (Or only after discussion with your Consultant)

- If you are or think you may be pregnant.
- If you have liver or kidney disease.
- If you are breast feeding.
- If you have recently had or are about to have Vaccinations.

When should you be careful taking MMF? Be sure to tell your doctor if:

- You have any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- You have episodes of infection.
- If you have not had chicken pox or shingles but come in contact with someone who has, or if you develop chicken pox or shingles, you should stop MMF and see your doctor immediately, as you may need special treatment.
- You are on any other medication.

Can I have immunisations while I am on MMF?

<p>You should avoid live vaccines such as: Oral Polio Rubella (German Measles) Yellow Fever Oral Typhoid Tuberculosis</p>	<p>It is safe to have these immunisations: Hepatitis Influenza Tetanus Pneumo-vaccine Meningo-vaccine Injected Polio Injected Typhoid</p>
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Inactivated polio vaccine can be given instead of the 'live' polio vaccine and should also be used with brothers and sisters and other household members. Contact with people who have been given the 'live' polio vaccine should be avoided for 4–6 weeks after vaccination.

An Annual FLU VACCINE should be given while on this treatment. Please arrange to see your general practitioner each year to discuss this.

How should MMF be taken?

- Always take the tablets as your Doctor directs.
- Swallow tablets whole, do not suck or chew them.
- Your Specialist will tell you what dose to take which may change continually. You will be taking between 1-3 gm per day. This depends on your body weight and your response to therapy.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you realize. However, if you do not realize 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.

How long will MMF take to work?

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

What are the possible side effects?

Normally this treatment is tolerated well. You may, however have some unwanted reactions.

- Initially you may feel nausea after tablets, which is often relieved by taking them after food.
- General tiredness can occur at first but wears off after continued use.
- Diarrhea can also occur initially but wears off with continued use or reduced dose.
- Your blood count is monitored regularly because MMF can reduce your blood cell count. Levels return to normal when treatment is reduced or stopped.
- Occasionally, people experience a slight shake, headache or muscle pain.
- There are other less common effects including agitation and anxiety, impaired liver function and jaundice.
- Some people have an increased incidence of infections both viral and bacterial, so it is important to inform your Doctor if you feel at all unwell.
- MMF reduces your body's defense mechanism. Because of this, there is an increased risk of skin cancer. Therefore you should limit your exposure to sunlight by wearing appropriate protective clothing and using a sunscreen with a high protective factor.
- Lymphoma (cancer of the lymphoid tissues) has been reported but is very rare.
- In cases of serious effects the treatment is stopped completely.

Does MMF affect fertility or pregnancy?

We advise all women of child-bearing age who are taking immunosuppressive treatments, to avoid pregnancy while on treatment, as well as for at least 6 weeks after stopping treatment. This is because the drugs are associated with an increased risk of birth defects and/or developmental problems. Men taking immunosuppressive treatments may also need to take precautions.

The most appropriate form of contraception depends on the medications you are taking so please ask us for advice. Please let us know if you wish to plan a family so that we can discuss treatment options with you.

Driving and using machines

MMF has not been shown to impair your ability to drive or operate machinery.

May I drink alcohol while taking MMF?

If you drink alcohol you should only drink it in small amounts because MMF can affect your liver

If you experience problems, contact your GP or XXXX Hospital:
Casualty: 0141.....
Uveitis Specialist Nurse: 0141.....

Further information

There is **patient Uveitis information and self help group** that supplies leaflets and newsletters for you to contact if you wish.

Uveitis Information Group
South House, Sweening,
Vidlein, Shetland Isles, ZE2 9QE
Email: info@uveitis.net
Website: www.uveitis.net

For this leaflet in Large Print, Braille, Audio, or Email, please call xxxxx

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