

Cyclosporine

Information For Patient With Glomerulonephritis

Generic Name	Brand Name
Cyclosporine (SYE-kloe-SPOR-in)	Neoral®

What is Cyclosporine and why is it being recommended for me?

- Cyclosporine is used to control diseases of the immune system such as glomerulonephritis (inflammation of the kidneys).
- It works by lowering your immune system.
- It can reduce the leakage of protein from your kidneys into the urine.

How should I take Cyclosporine?

- The number of Cyclosporine pills can change so make sure you are taking the correct dose.
- Take Cyclosporine twice daily. Space doses evenly apart.
- Take Cyclosporine with or without food, but be consistent. If it causes an upset stomach, try taking it with food.
- Avoid switching between brand name and generic Cyclosporine.
- Do not remove Cyclosporine capsule from the blister package until just prior to use. Capsules have a “skunk-like” odour. This is normal.
- Swallow capsules whole with water. Do not cut, crush or chew the capsules.
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice as they can increase Cyclosporine levels.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. But, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and take the next dose at the regular time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time to make up for a missed dose.

What else do I need to know before taking Cyclosporine?

- If you experience diarrhea and/or vomiting and are not able to eat or drink to the point of dehydration, please stop your Cyclosporine and inform the clinic.
- Some medications can affect your cyclosporine dose. Always contact the clinic before starting any new prescription and/or nonprescription medications (including vitamins and herbal products).

What monitoring will I need?

- Your Cyclosporine dose is based on the level in the blood. This ensures there is the right amount in your body.
- Your clinic will inform you when you require a Cyclosporine level. For information about blood monitoring, your clinic can provide you with the Cyclosporine Blood Level Monitoring Information Handout or it is available on [our website](#).

What are the possible side effects of Cyclosporine?

- All medications may cause side effects; however, many people only experience mild side effects or none at all. Contact the clinic if you have any concerns about the following possible side effects:

Side effects and what to do

	Side Effects
Most Common (10-20% of people experience)	Headaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to help with headaches.
	Stomach upset, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may improve as your body gets used to Cyclosporine. • Taking Cyclosporine with food may help.
	Increase in blood pressure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor your blood pressure regularly. • Adjustment or addition of blood pressure medication may be needed.
	Hair growth on face and limbs (may be reversible)
	Gum swelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be minimized with good oral hygiene and regular dental check-ups.
	Tremors or shaking of hands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually related to the amount of Cyclosporine in your body. • Decreases as your Cyclosporine blood level decreases.
	Changes in kidney function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clinic will monitor your kidney function and adjust your Cyclosporine dose as required.
	Increase in potassium level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clinic will monitor your potassium level.
Less Common (less than 10% of people experience)	Increase in cholesterol and triglyceride levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clinic will monitor your cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
	Increased risk of infection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclosporine lowers your body's ability to fight infection. • Avoid close contact with people who have an infection, a cold or the flu. • Wash your hands with soap often and/or use hand sanitizer. • Report any signs and symptoms of infection (such as fever, chills, bad sore throat, pain with urinating, etc.) to your doctor immediately.
Rare (less than 1% of people experience)	Increase in blood sugar (diabetes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clinic will monitor your blood sugar levels regularly. • Adjustment or addition of diabetes medication may be needed.
	Cancer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclosporine may increase your risk of cancer. • This risk is present with most medications that decrease your immune system. • Avoid sunlamps and tanning beds. • Use sunscreen and wear clothing and eyewear that protect you from the sun.

Questions? Contact the Clinic at: _____

ORN gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the ORN GN Drug Access Task Group, the ORN GN Patient and Family Panel, and the ORN GN Priority Panel in preparing this handout. This handout is provided for informational purposes only. It is meant to supplement a discussion with your healthcare team. Please contact a pharmacist or other health care professionals if you have any further questions regarding this medication.