

Ihotaudit

Patient instructions, Ciclosporin

Trade names: Sandimmun neoral®, Ciqorin®

Indications and mode of action

Ciclosporin is an immunosuppressive medication, which means that it calms down inflammatory reactions. It is used to treat many difficult and long-term skin conditions.

Dosage

The dosage of ciclosporin is personalized. The usual dose is 2–5 mg per kilogram of bodyweight a day. The capsules are taken with plenty of water in two separate doses during the day.

The effect will start to show in a few weeks.

Adverse effects

Ciclosporin usually causes mild adverse effects. The possible adverse effects include headache and various stomach ailments. You may also experience tiredness, minor tremors, pins and needles, numbness, muscle cramps, and very rarely increased hair growth and swelling of the gums. Ciclosporin may decrease kidney function and cause elevated blood pressure. We recommend that you monitor your blood pressure at home or at your health center every two weeks during the first two months of ciclosporin therapy. Later on, you should check your blood pressure once a month. Contact the unit responsible for your care if your blood pressure is repeatedly over 140/90 mmHg.

You should also take care to protect yourself from the sun, especially if you have been previously treated with UV therapy or you have otherwise had a lot of sun exposure. In some cases, ciclosporin may increase the risk of malignant skin changes. You may also be more prone to various infections during the therapy. You do not need to pause ciclosporin medication during a common cold. However, if you experience a fever of over 38 degrees Celsius, you should pause ciclosporin during the fever and contact your health center, for example, to have the infection treated properly.

Interactions with other medications

Ciclosporin interacts with several other drugs and herbal products. Always tell your doctor that you are taking ciclosporin.

During ciclosporin medication, you should avoid drinking grapefruit juice (increases the amount of ciclosporin in the blood), anti-inflammatory analgesics, herbal products such as St. John's wort extract, and excessive use of alcohol.

Vaccinations

All patients taking ciclosporin should get the seasonal influenza vaccination **annually**. If ciclosporin is the only immunosuppressive medicine that you use, you may take vaccines as usual without the need to pause ciclosporin.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Ciclosporin can be used while pregnant or breastfeeding, if necessary.

Follow-ups

Ciclosporin therapy requires regular blood tests. Complete blood count, liver and kidney function levels, lipid, potassium and uric acid levels, and a urine sample need to be checked regularly during the therapy. In the beginning, the laboratory tests will be taken every two weeks for the first eight weeks. Then, the laboratory tests will be taken before your check-up appointment, which takes place approximately three months after starting the medication. After the check-up, the tests will be checked every 2–3 months according to the doctor's opinion. If there is anything unusual in the laboratory tests, it may be necessary to check them more often. You will be contacted only if there is something abnormal in the test results.

For the treatment to be safe, it is necessary that you have the laboratory tests taken. If you cannot attend the planned tests, it is not safe to continue the treatment and it may have to be discontinued.

We will schedule the follow-up tests at your appointment at the Skin and Allergy Hospital, and the tests will be taken at a HUSLAB laboratory. Book an appointment for the lab tests online at www.huslab.fi

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