

# Cyclosporine

[S-eye-clo-SPOR-in]  
Neoral®

<http://Rheuminfo.com>  
your rheumatology resource

## How to use this medication

### What is it



Cyclosporine is a medication used to treat diseases like lupus and vasculitis. While taking this medicine it is important to have blood tests done and see your doctor on a regular basis.

### Take it twice a day



The normal dose of cyclosporine is between 50 and 150 mg taken twice per day. The dose is based on your weight. Cyclosporine is available as capsules and as a liquid.

### Be patient



It will take 3 to 4 months for the cyclosporine to work. It is important for you to keep taking the medicine.

## What you need to do

### Stop if you have an infection



Cyclosporine can make it harder for you to fight off infections. Stop the medicine and call your rheumatologist if:

1. You develop a fever
2. You think you have an infection
3. You are given antibiotics to treat an infection

### Get regular blood tests



Have your blood tested **regularly**. This is important to make sure cyclosporine isn't affecting your blood counts or kidneys.

### Get your blood pressure checked



Cyclosporine can cause your blood pressure to rise. It is important to have your blood pressure checked on a regular basis.

### Drug interactions



There are several prescription medications that are not safe to take with cyclosporine. Discuss any new medication with your doctor.

## Side effects & important facts

### Nausea & feeling unwell



Some people can feel sick to their stomach, bloated, have stomach pain, or develop diarrhea when they take cyclosporine. Please let your doctor know if this happens.

### Kidneys



Cyclosporine can affect your kidneys. Your kidneys are watched through regular blood testing. Drink 8-10 glasses of water per day to flush your kidneys.

### Liver



Cyclosporine can irritate the liver. This is rare and watched through regular blood testing.

### Other side effects

#### Cyclosporine can cause other side effects:

- Tiredness
- Headache
- Increased hair growth on the face or arms
- Swelling of the gums
- Flushing
- Tingling in the fingers, toes, tip of the nose, tongue, or lips
- Weakness and muscle cramps
- Tremors

### Pregnancy



Cyclosporine is not normally taken during pregnancy. If you become pregnant or are planning to become pregnant please let your doctor know.

### Cancer



When used for long periods of time, cyclosporine may be associated with a small risk of lymphoma and skin cancer.

## When should I call my doctor

### Please call if you need to stop



- If you feel sick and want to stop
- If you are concerned about any side effects
- If you want to or have already stopped the medicine

### Other reasons to call your doctor:



New high blood pressure



Fever or think you have an infection



Pregnant or planning pregnancy



Severe new headache



If you are having surgery

## Other important information

### Stopping cyclosporine



You can simply stop taking cyclosporine. Please call your doctor if you stop the medication.