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Mycophenolate mofetil (CellCept, Myfenax)



There are several brands of mycophenolate available and your treatment could be affected by switching between brands. Each time you collect a new supply from your pharmacy, please check to see if your medicine looks the same as before. If it is different, discuss this with your pharmacist who will advise you.

Taking mycophenolate could reduce your body's resistance to infections. Try to keep away from people who you know are ill, and report any sign of infection (raised temperature, cough) to your doctor.

About mycophenolate

Type of medicine	An immunosuppressant
Used for	To prevent rejection of new organs following heart, kidney or liver transplants
Also called	CellCept®, Ceptava® (as mycophenolic acid); Myfenax®, Myfortic® (as mycophenolic acid)
Available as	Tablets, capsules, oral liquid medicine, and injection

Mycophenolate is used to prevent the rejection of new organs following a transplant operation. Sometimes the body tries to reject new donor tissue and mycophenolate helps to prevent this rejection by suppressing your body's immune, or defence, system. It will be prescribed for you, along with other medicines to prevent rejection, by a transplant specialist doctor.

There are two different forms of mycophenolate; mycophenolate mofetil and mycophenolic acid. There are also a number of different brands of tablets and capsules. Ideally you should not swap between these different formulations, so each time you collect a new supply from your pharmacy, please check to make sure that it looks to be the same as you have had before.

Before taking mycophenolate

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine can only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking mycophenolate it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding.
- If you have any problems with the way your kidneys work (unless this is the reason for the treatment).
- If you are receiving any treatment for a problem with your digestive system.
- If you are taking or using any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to take mycophenolate

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about mycophenolate and how to take the brand of medicine you have been supplied with. It will also provide you with a full list of side-effects which you could experience from taking mycophenolate.
- Take mycophenolate exactly as your doctor tells you to. It is usual to take two doses daily (morning and evening). The number of tablets or capsules for each dose will vary depending on the type of transplant you have had. Your doctor will tell you what dose is right for you and this will also be printed on the label of the pack to remind you about what the doctor said. If you have been given the oral suspension (liquid medicine), please measure out your dose using the oral dose dispensers provided.
- You can take mycophenolate either before or after meals, but it is best if you stick to one or the other.
- Swallow the tablet/capsule whole - do not crush or chew the tablets, or open the capsules before swallowing.
- Try to take your doses at the same times of day each day, as this will help you to remember to take them regularly. If you do forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember (unless it is nearly time for your next dose, in which case leave out the missed dose). Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten dose.
- Continue to take mycophenolate unless you are advised otherwise by your doctor. Stopping the treatment will increase the risk of your body rejecting the transplant.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep all your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress. Your doctor will want you to have regular blood tests during the treatment.
- Your doctor will discuss with you the possibility of a slightly increased risk of cancer associated with taking an immunosuppressant. While you are taking mycophenolate, you may become more sensitive to the harmful effects of sunlight, and as a result be at an increased risk of skin cancer. Because of this it is important that you do not use sunbeds, that you avoid strong sunlight, and that you protect yourself with a sun cream with a high sun protection factor (SPF of at least 15).
- Mycophenolate could harm an unborn child. It is important that you do not become pregnant while you are taking mycophenolate. Women should use two methods of contraception from before the start of the treatment to 6 weeks after stopping the treatment. Please make sure you have discussed with your doctor which types of contraception are suitable for you and your partner. Men should use condoms during treatment and for 13 weeks after taking the last dose, and their partners should also use contraception during this same period.
- While you are taking mycophenolate, and for a while after you stop treatment, do not have any immunisations (vaccinations) without talking to your doctor first. Mycophenolate lowers your body's resistance and there is a risk that you may get an infection from the vaccine. Also, some vaccines can be less effective.
- If you are due to have any treatment like an operation or dental treatment, please tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking.
- If you buy any medicines or herbal remedies, please check with a pharmacist that they are suitable for you to take with your other medicines. This is because some medicines (such as antacids and some vitamin preparations which contain iron) can interfere with the way mycophenolate works.

Can mycophenolate cause problems?

Your doctor will have discussed with you the possibility of unwanted side-effects and how you will be regularly checked for signs of these. You will also have been told that you may become more prone to infections. Some of the most common unwanted effects of mycophenolate are listed below. Let your doctor know if any of the following continue or become troublesome, or if you experience any other symptoms which you are concerned about or think may be due to the medicine.

Very common mycophenolate side-effects (these effect more than 1 in 10 people)	What can I do if I experience this?
Increased susceptibility to infections (such as chest infections), high temperature	Let your doctor know straightaway if you have a high temperature, a cough, or if you feel generally unwell
Unexpected bruising or bleeding	Let your doctor know straightaway about this
Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting), tummy (abdominal) pain	Stick to simple foods - avoid rich or spicy meals
Diarrhoea	Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluids

How to store mycophenolate

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

Further reading & references

- [Manufacturer's PIL, CellCept® 250 mg Capsules](#); Roche Products Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated August 2018.
- British National Formulary, 76th Edition (Sep 2018); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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