MYCOPHENOLATE (for transplant patients)

my-koh-fen-oh-late

What does it do?

Mycophenolate is an immunosuppressant used with other medicines to prevent transplant rejection.

Before you start

- *Mycophenolate* weakens your immune system, making it harder for your body to fight infections. You may need tests before you start to make sure you don't have any infections like tuberculosis (TB), HIV, or hepatitis B and C.
- Ask your doctor what vaccines you might need before you start and while you are taking *mycophenolate*. You should not have a live vaccine while taking *mycophenolate*.
- Do not get pregnant while taking *mycophenolate*, and for at least 6 weeks after stopping it. If you plan to become pregnant, or find you are pregnant, discuss this with your doctor. Do not breastfeed while taking *mycophenolate*.

How should you take it?

Take *mycophenolate* regularly as directed with a glass of water.
Swallow the tablets or capsules whole – do not break, crush or chew.
Measure the liquid carefully with the oral syringe supplied. Shake the bottle well before measuring each dose. Wash your hands after using the liquid.

What if you forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as possible. If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and carry on as normal. Do not take two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. echinacea) or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Reduced number of blood cells that fight infections or help your blood to clot - symptoms include: fever, chills, sore throat or generally feeling unwell, or easy or unusual bruising or bleeding Change in heartbeat Short of breath, persistent dry cough	Tell your doctor immediately
Loss of co-ordination, muscle weakness, forgetfulness, or vision changes Diarrhoea, stomach pain, black bowel motions Dizziness, pale skin Increased blood pressure	Tell your doctor
Headache, trouble sleeping, mood changes, anxiety Tremor, tingling or numbness Swollen feet or legs Acne, hair loss or thinning, skin rash, itching Nausea, vomiting, constipation, indigestion	Tell your doctor if troublesome

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- Do not stop taking *mycophenolate* unless your doctor at the transplant clinic tells you to. You may have to take *mycophenolate* for the rest of your life.
- You will need regular blood tests while you are taking *mycophenolate* to monitor its effects on your blood.
- Protect yourself from too much sunlight while taking immunosuppressant medicines (they may increase your risk of skin cancer). Always cover up and apply a thick layer of broad spectrum sunscreen (at least SPF30) when outside. Do not use sunbeds.
- Women using *mycophenolate* for a long time may need cervical screening more often. Discuss with your doctor.
- It is important to tell anyone who gives you medical or dental treatment that you are taking *mycophenolate*.
- Store *mycophenolate* liquid as directed. Discard any leftover liquid after the expiry date on the bottle – ask your pharmacist how to do this safely.