

Ophthalmology

Mycophenolate Mofetil for uveitis

Mycophenolate Mofetil is a drug that can help prevent uveitis causing damage to your eye. You can discuss the benefits and risks of taking Mycophenolate Mofetil with your healthcare professional before you start treatment.

What is Mycophenolate Mofetil?

Mycophenolate Mofetil belongs to a group of medicines called immunosuppressants. Immunosuppressants are given to treat autoimmune conditions where your body's own defence mechanisms attack your own cells. This causes inflammation which you experience as pain, swelling and redness.

In order to treat this, we give immunosuppressants to reduce the activity of your own body's defence system. This then reduces the inflammation effects of the condition.

Mycophenolate Mofetil and uveitis

Uveitis is sometimes linked to autoimmune conditions but there are other times where no known cause is found. The effects of uveitis can be sight threatening due to the recurrent bouts of inflammation which can lead onto permanent damages to the delicate eye structures. Mycophenolate Mofetil can help prevent uveitis causing damage to your eye.



Patient Information

How long does Mycophenolate Mofetil take to work?

Mycophenolate does not work immediately. It can take up to 4 months before your symptoms improve.

How to take Mycophenolate Mofetil

If you have been prescribed tablets/capsules:

- do not break or crush the tablets/capsules
- do not take any tablets/capsules that have broken or split open
- it is recommended that you take the capsule or tablet with food and water and swallow as this can stop you feeling sick and getting stomach pains

It is important to keep taking Mycophenolate Mofetil even if it doesn't seem to be working at first. It's also important to keep taking Mycophenolate Mofetil when your symptoms start to improve as this will help control your condition.

What should you do if you miss a dose?

Take your missed dose as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for your next one.

Do not take any more than your regular dose to make up for a missed dose.

Regular blood tests

Mycophenolate Mofetil can affect your blood count and it can sometimes cause liver or kidney problems. Your doctor will arrange for you to have a blood test before you start treatment and regular blood tests while you are taking Mycophenolate Mofetil. This is a precaution to monitor your blood count. Please keep a note of when your blood tests are due and remind your doctor about them.

Patient Information

Side-effects of Mycophenolate Mofetil

Common side effects:

- feeling sick
- stomach pains
- diarrhoea and/or vomiting
- constipation
- increased risk of infection (fever, sore throat)
- flu-like symptoms
- a constant cough or problems breathing
- the sensation that your heart is beating unusually
- sudden weight loss
- unexplained bruising or bleeding (anaemia)
- unexplained changes in mood
- headaches – particularly if you don't usually get them
- acne or skin rash
- skin cancer
- swollen gums or an unusual taste in your mouth
- hair loss

Other complications

- malignancy
- damage to the brain and spinal cord (pins and needles, weakness, shaky movements, speech problems, changes in behaviour or mood, difficulty moving your face, arms, or legs)

Inform your hospital doctor, GP or uveitis specialist nurse if you experience any side effects.

You must contact 111 or 999 to seek immediate advice if your side effect symptoms are severe.

Mycophenolate Mofetil may need to be stopped if the side effects are making you feel too ill.

Patient Information

Chickenpox and shingles and Mycophenolate Mofetil

You must see your doctor as soon as possible if you come into contact with anyone with shingles or chickenpox, or if you get shingles or chickenpox.

Chickenpox and shingles can affect you badly if you are taking Mycophenolate Mofetil. You may need antiviral treatment and your Mycophenolate Mofetil may be stopped until you recover.

Other medicines and Mycophenolate Mofetil

Please also tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking, or have recently taken, any other medicines. This includes medicines obtained without a prescription such as herbal medicines. This is because Mycophenolate Mofetil can affect the way some other medicines work.

Vaccines

Ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice first if you need a vaccine while taking Mycophenolate Mofetil. They will advise you on which vaccines you can be given. It is advised to get the pneumococcal vaccine, your yearly flu vaccines and covid vaccinations.

Surgery

If you are due to have surgery your consultant will decide whether your Mycophenolate Mofetil should be temporarily stopped before surgery.

Pregnancy and contraception

Women taking Mycophenolate Mofetil who could become pregnant must use an effective method of contraception.

This includes:

- before you start taking Mycophenolate Mofetil
- during your entire treatment with Mycophenolate Mofetil
- for 6 weeks after you stop taking Mycophenolate Mofetil.

Talk to your doctor about the most suitable contraception for you.

In men taking Mycophenolate Mofetil the available evidence does not indicate an increased risk of malformations or miscarriage if the father takes mycophenolate. However, a risk cannot be completely excluded.

Patient Information

As a precaution you or your female partner are recommended to use reliable contraception during treatment. Talk to your doctor about the potential risks and alternative therapies if you are planning to have a child.

You must inform your doctor immediately if you become pregnant during Mycophenolate Mofetil treatment.

Breastfeeding

Do not take Mycophenolate Mofetil if you are breastfeeding.

This is because small amounts of the medicine can pass into the mother's milk.

Tips to reduce your risk of infection and effects of sunlight

- Try to avoid close contact with people who have an infection.
- Wash your hands regularly
- Keep your mouth clean by brushing your teeth regularly.
- Stop smoking
- Make sure your food is stored and prepared properly.
- Try to keep your house clean and hygienic.
- Limit the amount of sunlight and UV light you get by:
 - wearing protective clothing that also covers your head, neck, arms and legs
 - using a sunscreen with a high protection factor.

Contact numbers

University Hospital Coventry

Retinal Specialist Nurse, Sister Mann (Jas):

024 7696 4000 (switchboard) and ask them to bleep **2828**

Mr Pagliarini and Miss Priti Kulkarni secretary: **024 76 966497**

Patient Information

Eye Clinic Liaison Officer:

Sue Grewcock

University Hospital Coventry: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

07834147178 (please leave voicemail)

Rugby St Cross: Tuesday and Friday

01788 663004

Emergency eye appointment information is available on the next page.

Emergency eye appointments: New booking system

If you have an urgent eye problem, you can now book an on-the-day telephone consultation via the Eye Emergency Referral Service (EERS).



Scan the QR code or visit www.uhcw.nhs.uk and search Eye Emergency Referral Service. You can book a telephone consultation via this link.

You will be spoken to by an expert clinician who will give you specialist advice on the next steps to take.

Please provide a phone number which you can be contacted on for the consultation. Please also be aware that you will be phoned as close to the allotted time as possible, although at busy times unfortunately there may be a delay.

In the event that you feel you cannot wait to speak to someone, or do not have online access, then you may call 0247 696 4800.

This phone line is open 9am - 1pm; 1.30pm - 5pm (Monday - Friday, excluding bank holidays) and 9am - 12pm (Saturday).

Please only attend the Eye Outpatient department if you have had a telephone consultation in advance and have been advised to attend.

In the event of an eye emergency out of hours, please attend the Minor Injuries Unit.

Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 6474 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

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www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback



Document History

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