

# Experts in Skin & Hair

## Patient Information Leaflet: Ciclosporin for Severe Inflammatory Skin Conditions

### What is Ciclosporin?

Ciclosporin is an immunosuppressive medication used to treat various severe inflammatory skin conditions, including psoriasis, atopic dermatitis (eczema), and other autoimmune disorders. It works by suppressing the immune system's response, reducing inflammation and skin symptoms.

### How Does Ciclosporin Work?

Ciclosporin specifically inhibits the activity of T-cells, which are a type of white blood cell involved in the inflammatory response. By modulating the immune system, ciclosporin helps decrease the severity of skin conditions characterized by excessive inflammation.

**Indications:** Ciclosporin is typically prescribed for:

- Moderate to severe psoriasis
- Severe atopic dermatitis (eczema)
- Other inflammatory skin conditions that have not responded adequately to other treatments
- Severe Alopecia Areata

### Important Considerations Before Use:

- **Medical History:** Inform your consultant about your complete medical history, particularly any history of kidney problems, high blood pressure, or infections.
- **Medications:** Please bring a list of all current medications to your appointment so we can check for possible drug interactions
- **Allergies:** Notify your doctor if you have any known allergies to ciclosporin or any other medications.
- **Pregnancy and Breastfeeding:** Ciclosporin should only be used during pregnancy if clearly needed. Discuss potential risks and benefits with your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding or planning on becoming pregnant in the near future.

### How to Take Ciclosporin:

- **Dosage:** Your doctor will determine the appropriate dosage based on your condition, weight, and response to treatment. It is usually taken in the form of capsules. The total dose is usually split in two and taken morning and evening.
- **Timing:** Take ciclosporin as prescribed, either consistently with or without food. Avoid taking it with grapefruit or grapefruit juice, as this can affect medication levels.
- **Consistency:** Take the medication at the same time each day to maintain even levels in your bloodstream.

### Possible Side Effects:

While ciclosporin is generally effective, it may cause side effects in some individuals, including:

- Nausea or vomiting
- High blood pressure
- Kidney function changes (monitored regularly through blood tests)
- Increased risk of infections
- Tremors
- Gum overgrowth

It is essential to report any unusual symptoms or side effects to your consultant.



# Experts in Skin & Hair

## Monitoring During Treatment:

- **Regular Check-Ups:** Your doctor will schedule regular monitoring appointments to check kidney function, blood pressure, and overall health during treatment.
- **Blood Tests:** Expect to have frequent blood tests to monitor for any side effects or complications, especially during the early stages of treatment.
- **Home blood pressure:** We recommend you buy a home blood pressure machine and take weekly readings at the same time, eg an evening when sitting and relaxing. Please record these and bring to your consultation so we can monitor the trend over time.

## Lifestyle Considerations:

- **Avoid Infections:** Since ciclosporin suppresses the immune system, avoid crowded places and people who are sick. Practice good hygiene, especially thorough hand washing, to reduce infection risk.
- **Healthy Diet:** Maintain a balanced diet and stay hydrated. Discuss any dietary restrictions or recommendations with your consultant.
- **Sun Protection:** Use sunscreen to protect your skin from UV damage, as some patients may be more sensitive to sunlight while on this medication. SPF 50 or higher is recommended. It is sensible to avoid the midday sun from 11-3pm, as this is when UV light is often strongest. Seek the shade or cover your skin with clothing.

## When to Seek Medical Advice:

- If you experience unexpected side effects, signs of infection (such as fever or persistent sore throat), changes in kidney function (decreased urine output or very dark urine, leg swelling), or any other concerning symptoms, contact your consultant as soon as possible or arrange a follow up appointment.

## Conclusion:

Ciclosporin can provide significant benefits for individuals with severe inflammatory skin conditions. By following your consultant's instructions and maintaining regular monitoring, you can effectively manage your condition while minimising potential risks.

For any questions or concerns about your treatment with ciclosporin, please consult your consultant.

