

# **Mycophenolate**

## *Immunosuppressive medicine*

*Pronounced: my-koh-fen-oh-late (brand name: Cellcept)*

### **What is mycophenolate?**

Mycophenolate lowers the number of white blood cells your body can send to attack your new heart. This helps to prevent rejection. It can also be used to reverse the rejection process once it has started.

### **Your Dose**

- *Mycophenolate mofetil* comes in capsules of 250 mg and 500 mg. Patients who take mycophenolate mofetil start at a dose of 1 gram twice a day.
- *Mycophenolate sodium* comes in tablets of 180 and 360 mg. Patients who take mycophenolate sodium start at 720 mg twice a day.

Your dose may be raised or lowered based on your white blood cell counts and how well your kidneys are working.

### **How do I take it?**

Take mycophenolate on an empty stomach.

When your mycophenolate level is checked, you need to have your blood drawn 12 hours after your last dose. We ask you to get this test done in the morning, before you take your morning dose of the medicine. Be sure to bring your pills with you so you can take your morning dose right after your blood is drawn.

### **How is it stored?**

Store mycophenolate in a closed container at room temperature.

### **What are the side effects?**

Mycophenolate can cause some side effects. Some of the side effects are:

#### ***Risk of Infection***

Because mycophenolate lowers your white blood cell count, you have a greater chance of getting infections. See Chapter 4, "Infections," for tips to prevent infections.

### ***Bone Marrow Suppression***

Mycophenolate also lowers the number of red blood cells and platelets your bone marrow makes. This can make you feel tired or weak. This is a symptom of anemia, which occurs when you do not have enough red blood cells carrying oxygen around your body. If your platelet count is low, you may bruise easily.

Call your transplant team **right away** if you have:

- Stools that are very dark and look like tar
- Blood in your urine

### ***Nausea, Vomiting, or Diarrhea***

Some patients have stomach-related side effects from mycophenolate. These may be mild to severe. Tell your transplant team if you have diarrhea or are vomiting for 24 hours or more and you cannot keep your medicines down.

### ***Lesions***

Some patients develop sores or lesions in the mouth or on their gums while they are on mycophenolate. A few patients may have lesions throughout their digestive tract. Call your transplant team if you find lesions in your mouth or think you might have them in your digestive tract.

## **Questions?**

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Cardiology Clinic:  
Weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,  
call 206-598-4300.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-744-2500. Say you are a heart transplant patient. A nurse will assess your problem and help you.