

Mycophenolate Mofetil (MMF) – respiratory medicine

Information for patients

What is MMF?

MMF is used to treat a wide range of interstitial lung diseases (ILD). It is an immunosuppressant drug that helps to control your body's immune system. It helps to control inflammation within the lungs and protects the lungs from ongoing damage.

MMF does not work straight away, it may take around 3 months before you notice any benefit.

What dose of MMF should I take?

Your doctor will advise you on the most appropriate dose. You will usually be started on a lower dose to ensure you can tolerate the medicine. If you tolerate this well, your doctor may increase your dose.

How should I take my MMF?

MMF is usually taken twice a day (morning and night). The tablets/capsules should be swallowed whole with a glass of water. It can be taken with or without food. Do not crush or chew the medicine.

What are the side effects of MMF?

Most patients do not experience significant side effects. However, the most common side effects are:

- Nausea
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pain.

As MMF suppresses (reduces) your immune system it can make you more vulnerable to developing infections. If you develop any of the following side effects you should seek urgent medical attention from your doctor or nurse:

- Fever or infections
- Unexplained bleeding or bruising
- Mouth ulcers
- Rash or blistering of skin
- Sore throat.

If you come into contact with someone who has chickenpox or shingles, you should see a doctor immediately (especially if you have never had chickenpox).

Although it is rare, there is a slightly increased risk of cancer in people taking MMF. Due to this risk, you should always protect your skin from the sun. This includes: not sunbathing, wearing protective clothing, and using sunscreen.

For a full list of potential side effects that may occur with MMF, please read the leaflet that is supplied with your medication.

Is any monitoring needed?

Regular blood tests are important whilst taking MMF, this is to check for any unwanted effects on your liver function or blood cell production.

Bloods are usually required every 2 weeks for 6 weeks Then monthly for 3 months Then every 3 months thereafter. Some sites may check bloods more frequently in the initial period.

You must not take MMF unless you are having regular blood checks.

What if I forget to take my MMF?

If you forget to take your MMF, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is close to the time your next dose is due, miss this dose and take the next dose at the usual time. Never take two doses at once.

Contact your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure of what to do.

What if I take too much?

If you take more tablets than you have been told to take, please contact your doctor immediately.

Can I take MMF with my other medications?

Many medications can be taken safely with MMF. However, some medications can react with MMF. If you take any other medication (including over-the-counter medication and herbal remedies), please let your doctor or pharmacist know before starting MMF so that they can check it is safe to take.

You should always discuss any new medications with your doctor or pharmacist before starting them.

Can I have vaccinations whilst on MMF?

It is recommended that you should not receive any 'live' vaccines, such as the yellow fever vaccine.

Please discuss vaccinations with your doctor, as some are safe and recommended, such as the flu vaccination.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

You should not take MMF when pregnant or if you are planning on becoming pregnant. If you are thinking of starting a family whilst on MMF, please discuss this with your doctor. You must stop taking MMF for at least six weeks before trying to become pregnant.

It is important that reliable contraception **is used by both males and females** during treatment and for at least 90 days after stopping treatment. If you or your partner become pregnant during this time, please contact a medical professional.

You should not breastfeed whilst on MMF.

Can I drink alcohol whilst on MMF?

You should only drink alcohol in moderation whilst taking MMF. It is important to not exceed recommended limits.

More information

If you would like any further information about MMF, or if you have any concerns about your treatment, please contact.....