



# Mycophenolate

Information for Interstitial Lung Disease Clinic Patients

UHN

## What is the name of the medicine my doctor has prescribed?

| Generic Name                     | Brand Name           |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Mycophenolate (my-ko-fen-o-late) | Cellcept™, Myfortic™ |

## Why is this medication being recommended for me?

Mycophenolate is in a class of medications called “immunosuppressive” agents.

It works by affecting the body's immune system and reducing the amount of inflammation or active damage in your lungs. Inflammation is the precursor to fibrosis (scarring) in the lungs.

By reducing inflammation, it is hoped that Mycophenolate will prevent the formation of lung fibrosis and allow the inflamed lung to return to normal.

## What should I remember when taking Mycophenolate?

Before taking Mycophenolate:

- Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to Mycophenolate, Mycophenolic acid, or any other medications.
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any other prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking. Your doctor may need to change the doses of your medications or watch you carefully for side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.
  - You must use two forms of birth control before beginning treatment with Mycophenolate, during treatment, and for 6 weeks after treatment.
  - Your doctor will not allow you to begin taking Mycophenolate unless you have had a negative pregnancy test.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information:

[www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca)

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- If you become pregnant while you are taking Mycophenolate, call your doctor right away.
- Do not breastfeed while you are taking this medication.

Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had:

1. Lesch-Nyhan or Keeley-Seegmiller syndrome (diseases passed from one family member to another that cause high levels of a certain substance in the blood and problems with motion and behavior)
2. Any disease that affects your stomach or digestive system
3. Any type of cancer
4. Phenylketonuria (PKU) (a disease passed from one family member to another that requires patients to follow a special diet to prevent mental retardation)
  - If you have phenylketonuria, you should know that Mycophenolate liquid may be sweetened with aspartame that forms phenylalanine.
5. Liver or kidney disease.

### **While you are on Mycophenolate:**

- If you are taking antacids, take them 2 hours before, or 4 hours after taking Mycophenolate
- Tell your doctor if you have any problems with your eyesight, loss of coordination, or memory loss, which could be signs Progressive Multifocal Leukoencephalopathy (PML), a potential complication of taking Mycophenolate
- If you become pregnant, tell your doctor right away
- Do not have any vaccinations without talking to your doctor

### **What are the possible side effects of this medicine?**

Mycophenolate may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if you have any of these symptoms, if they are severe or do not go away:

- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Stomach pain
- Upset stomach
- Vomiting
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Pain, especially in the back, muscles, or joints

Some side effects can be serious. The following symptoms are uncommon, but if you experience any of the ones listed below, call your doctor right away:

- Swelling of the hands, feet, ankles, or lower legs
- Difficulty breathing
- Shaking hands that you cannot control
- Unusual bruising or bleeding
- Headache
- Fast heartbeat
- You are very, very tired
- Dizziness
- Pale skin
- Weakness
- Black and tarry stools
- Red blood in stools
- Vomiting material that looks like coffee grounds
- Loose, floppy muscles
- White patches in mouth or throat
- Swelling of the gums in your mouth
- Changes in your eyesight
- Rash

Mycophenolate may cause other side effects. Call your doctor if you have any unusual problems while taking this medication.

## **What monitoring will I need?**

Your doctor will order regular lab tests to check your response to Mycophenolate and monitor for drug toxicity.

You will need to have your blood counts (white blood cells, red blood cells, platelets) checked regularly. Depending on the results of these tests your doctor may ask for you to have some other tests done as well.

## **Who can I call if I have question or concerns about Mycophenolate?**

Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions or concerns about this medication.

This site does not provide medical advice.

These sheets are developed by the UHN Pharmacy Department. They are provided for informational purposes only. These sheets are meant to supplement a discussion with the pharmacist. Please contact a pharmacist or other health care professionals if you have any further questions regarding this medication.