

## How should I store the medicine?

- Keep the tablets away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.
- Keep all medicines out of reach of children.
- Do not dispose any medicines via wastewater or household waste. Ask your pharmacist how to dispose of medicines which are no longer needed. These measures will help to protect the environment.

## In Summary

### What you need to know about cyclophosphamide?

- Take oral cyclophosphamide once daily in the morning, unless instructed otherwise by your doctor.
- Drink plenty of water and maintain frequent urination.
- Always come for your blood tests on the scheduled date.
- Beware of the side effects and know when to seek immediate medical attention.
- Do not take over-the-counter medicines, supplements or herbal medicines without checking with your doctor/pharmacist/advanced practice nurse first.
- For patients who intend to start a family, consult your doctor before you start the treatment.
- If you have any questions about the treatment, please discuss it with your doctor/advanced practice nurse at 65762418 or Pharmacist at 63265077.

Produced by  
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# Cyclophosphamide



## About your medicine

- Cyclophosphamide is an alkylating agent, also considered as an immunosuppressant, to treat conditions like systemic vasculitis, systemic lupus erythematosus and systemic sclerosis.

## How is the medicine given?

- It is usually given orally after food once in the morning. It may also given intravenously every 2 to 4 weekly.
- The usual oral dose is 1.5–2.0mg/kg per day. A typical dose ranges from 50-150mg daily depending on the patient's response and tolerability to the medication.
- Drink plenty of water (preferably at least 8 glasses of water per day) while you are taking cyclophosphamide.

## How long does it take for the medicine to be effective?

- It may take several weeks for symptoms to improve and the full effect may take several months or longer.

## What should I do if I forget a dose?

- If you have missed a dose, take it as soon as you remember.
- If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule.
- Do not double the dose to make up for the missed dose.

## Do I skip dose if I am sick?

- Seek prompt advice from your doctor when you develop any of the serious symptoms described above.

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

- Common side effects:
  - Nausea & vomiting (can be controlled with anti-nausea medications)
  - Hair loss (reversible once the medication is stopped)
  - Skin rashes
  - Loss of appetite or weight
  - Feeling tired or weakness
  - Change in skin color
- Severe side effects:
  - Increased risk of infections due to reduced white blood cells (a key component of the body's immune system that helps to fight infections).
  - Infertility in both men and women (more often in older patients or taking higher dose for longer periods of time) and premature menopause in females.
  - Irritation of the bladder or cystitis (can be prevented by drinking plenty of water)
- The risk of developing cancers such as bladder cancer can rarely occur years after taking this medication. The risk is higher with long term use and higher cumulative doses of cyclophosphamide.

## When do I seek immediate medical attention?

- High fever (more than 38°C), chills and persistent sore throat
- Blood in the urine or painful urination
- Shortness of breath or swelling of feet or ankles
- Unusual bruising or bleeding
- Chest pain
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or whites of eyes)

## What should I do when I am taking the medicine?

- Come back to the hospital for regular blood tests as instructed by your doctor as side effects can happen at any time during the course of treatment, and some of it may not show symptoms.
- Avoid crowded places.

## Can I take other medicines or supplements?

- Your doctor may prescribe corticosteroid therapy, or other medicines, depending on the type of disease and its severity. Do inform other doctors treating you that you are on this medication.
- Do not take any over-the counter medicines and herbal supplements without informing your doctor or pharmacist.
- You should avoid live vaccines such as live polio, yellow fever, rubella (German measles), MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), typhoid and BCG (tuberculosis).

## What special dietary instructions should I follow?

- Maintain adequate hydration and frequent urination to prevent bladder toxicity.
- Do not consume raw or undercooked food.

## Can I start a family or breastfeed?

- Both men and women of childbearing age MUST use a reliable method of contraception to avoid the risk of an unplanned pregnancy as cyclophosphamide can cause serious birth defects.
- If you are planning to have a child, discuss it with your doctor before you begin the treatment.
- For mothers receiving cyclophosphamide, breastfeeding MUST be avoided.