

## **Cyclosporine, SANDIMMUN NEORAL® – in the treatment of rheumatic diseases**

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### **Mode of action**

Cyclosporine soothes joint inflammation and prevents the progress of rheumatic disease. In arthritic psoriasis, skin symptoms are also alleviated. The effect of cyclosporine starts 1-3 after onset of treatment.

### **Dosage/method of administration**

Cyclosporine is available as 25, 50 and 100 mg capsules. The dose, usually 2-3 mg/kg body weight/day, is prescribed by the doctor. Do not change the dose on your own. The capsules are swallowed whole with plenty of fluid. Remove the capsules from package just before use.

### **Adverse effects**

The side effects of cyclosporine treatment are usually mild and do not require withdrawal of treatment. Slight hand tremor, increased hirsutism (hair growth) or mild swelling of the gums may sometimes appear during treatment. Nausea, fatigue as well as needles and pins in the arms and legs may occur.

Cyclosporine may affect kidney function and increase blood pressure, which is why they are monitored during treatment. In some cases, antihypertensive medication may be needed to treat the increase in blood pressure.

### **Pregnancy and breastfeeding**

Cyclosporine may be used with discretion during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Before pregnancy, discuss your medication with your doctor.

### **Follow-up**

Safety tests are taken **2-3, 6 and 12 weeks after onset of treatment, and then once every 3–6 months**. The results are checked at the health centre. The safety tests include the following: **Basic blood count, B-NEUT and ALT**. **Crea** is checked once every 3-6 months. **U-ChemScr, CRP** and **ESR** are measured in connection with treatment assessment before doctor's appointment every 6–12 months.

**Blood pressure** Blood pressure is monitored regularly; first once a week, then once every 3-6 months. During treatment, diastolic pressure ("bottom number") should not be above 100.

## Other considerations

The adverse effects on gums can be reduced by paying special attention to oral and dental hygiene. **Remember to tell your dentist that you are taking cyclosporine.**

Some drugs may affect the efficacy or side effects of cyclosporine. That is why it is important that **your doctor is aware of all the medications you use.**

**Link** [Reumalääkkeiden ohjeet | Reumatalo.fi | Terveyskylä.fi](#) (in Finnish)

[Wellbeing services county of Satakunta](#)