

## CLIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Updated: **October 2017**

# Mycophenolate

- **Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again.**
- **Please ask your vet or veterinary nurse if you have any further questions.**
- **This medicine has been prescribed for *your* pet ONLY. Do not take it yourself or give it to another person or any other animal; it may harm them even if their symptoms appear to be the same.**

The medicine you have been given for your dog or cat is called mycophenolate. It may have a trade name such as CellCept® or Myfortic®, but often will just be called mycophenolate, mycophenolic acid or mycophenolate mofetil.

### What is mycophenolate?

Mycophenolate belongs to a group of medicines that are called *immunosuppressant drugs*. These drugs act to suppress the immune system in conditions where it starts to attack the body's own cells and tissues. Such diseases are referred to as immune-mediated or autoimmune diseases.

### Why has my pet been prescribed mycophenolate?

Mycophenolate is used to treat immune-mediated diseases, such as immune-mediated haemolytic anaemia (where the immune system starts to break down red blood cells) and immune-mediated thrombocytopenia (where the body's platelets (small cells that help the blood to clot) are affected). Immunosuppressant drugs can also be used to treat certain diseases that are associated with ongoing inflammation. Mycophenolate is often used alongside corticosteroid drugs as the combination can be more effective, and may allow doses of each individual drug to be reduced. The effects of mycophenolate can take from 2 days to 2 weeks to be seen.

### How should I store mycophenolate?

This medicine does not generally require special storage conditions. For safety, **all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children.**

### How do I give mycophenolate tablets to my pet?

Disposable gloves should be worn at all times when handling and administering mycophenolate tablets. Disguise the tablets in a small quantity of strongly flavoured food that your pet likes. Faeces, urine and saliva from dogs taking mycophenolate may contain small traces of the drug; therefore, do not allow your dog to lick your skin and make sure your dog urinates and defecates away from other dogs and people. Wear disposable gloves when picking up faeces in bags. Dispose of faeces in domestic waste.

### How long will my pet need to take mycophenolate?

Your vet will advise you on the length of time for which you will need to give this medicine. This may vary between patients. It is important that you complete the course of mycophenolate even if your pet seems to be well. If your pet is still unwell at the end of the course then you should see your vet as soon as possible.

### What should I do if I run out of tablets?

Try not to run out of tablets. Make sure you order more mycophenolate from your vet if your supply is getting low. If you do run out, contact your own vet for further advice and restart the course as soon as possible.

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

If a dose is missed, give the medication as soon as possible. However, it is best to skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your pet's next scheduled dose. **DO NOT** give a double dose to make up for the missed dose and do not exceed the total stated dose in any one 24-hour period.

### What should I do if my pet is accidentally given too many doses?

**Contact your vet immediately** if your pet has an overdose of mycophenolate. However, a single extra dose is unlikely to cause any significant problems.

### Can my pet take mycophenolate if I am already giving them other drugs?

Tell your vet if you are giving your pet any other medications, even if you think they already know. This includes herbal or off-the-shelf remedies from a pet shop or pharmacy. In particular, antacids such as omeprazole should be avoided as they decrease absorption of mycophenolate.

### What are the possible side effects of mycophenolate for my pet?

Side effects are uncommon; however, mycophenolate may cause bone marrow

suppression resulting in abnormally low numbers of red blood cells, platelets and some types of white blood cell. This can make your pet more susceptible to infections and, therefore, regular blood tests are recommended whilst your pet is taking mycophenolate. Mycophenolate may also cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and an increased incidence of infections. If your pet shows *any* unusual symptoms whilst taking this medication, please contact your vet.

### What should I do if my pet is unwell while taking mycophenolate?

If your pet is unwell while receiving medication, you should not give any further doses and should contact your vet as soon as possible for advice.

### What should I do if a person accidentally takes this drug?

If a person accidentally takes your pet's medicine, the person should be taken to the local hospital **immediately**. Take this leaflet and any remaining tablets plus their container (even if it is empty) with you.

### Whom do I contact if I want to know more?

If you have any questions about this drug, or concerns about your pet's health, contact your own vet. They will know your pet's medical history and will know about mycophenolate.

### The Prescribing Cascade

This medicine is authorized for use in human patients and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. The medicine is not authorized by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), for use in dogs/cats/pets. Your vet can explain the 'prescribing cascade' in further detail to you and also explain why they are prescribing this drug for your pet. You will be asked to sign a consent form stating that you understand the reasons that the drug is being prescribed and its possible complications, before the treatment is issued.

© British Small Animal Veterinary Association 2017. While the editors and the BSAVA have made every effort in preparing this information leaflet, the contents and any statements are made in good faith purely for general guidance and cannot be regarded as substitute for professional advice. The publishers, contributors and the BSAVA do not take responsibility for the information provided on this leaflet and hence do not accept any liability for loss or expense incurred (by you or persons that you disseminate the materials to) as a result of relying on content in this leaflet. To this end, you are advised to consult your vet and seek their professional advice before taking any steps set out in this leaflet. If you are a vet, you must not rely on the contents in this leaflet without independently verifying the correctness and veracity of the contents. BSAVA is not responsible for any alterations made to this document from the version supplied.