

CELLCEPT (MYCOPHENOLATE MOFETIL)

CellCept is an oral medication that is a safe and effective treatment for many skin problems, including chronic dermatitis, eczema, psoriasis, and various conditions which can produce blisters in the skin.

The original use for CellCept was to prevent organ rejection in patients who received a kidney transplant. Our immune system produces a certain kind of white blood cell known as a lymphocyte that protects our body from foreign substances. CellCept interferes with the action of these T cells from attacking the foreign organ and rejecting it. Some of the same types of T cells are overactive in many skin diseases such as dermatitis, eczema, psoriasis, and blistering skin problems. Therefore, CellCept can be effective in treating these conditions by preventing the overactivity of these lymphocytes.

CellCept is an option for patients with skin conditions for whom the standard treatment has not been successful or there are side effects from the other treatments. CellCept is often used in addition to other medications to try to prevent side effects from prolonged use.

CellCept is a medicine that is usually very well tolerated. Like all drugs, there are potential side effects. Most patients who take CellCept do not have any problems. Occasionally it can produce some stomach upset, diarrhea, or headache. Usually these types of side effects will disappear even though you keep taking the medicine. CellCept can have effects on some of the blood counts, so it is important to have your laboratory tests monitored while you are on therapy. Due to the effects on the lymphocytes and the immune system, CellCept can rarely decrease your body's ability to fight infection. If you develop fever or an infection, you should contact my office. CellCept has been found to be safer for your liver and kidney than many of the other medications that can work in a similar fashion. While taking this medicine, you will be monitored for side effects.

The absorption of CellCept can be decreased by taking it together with Calcium supplements or antacids. Less of the Cellcept will get into your system so it may not work as well as it should. You can take Calcium supplements and antacids, just take them at a separate time from the CellCept.

You should not take CellCept if you are pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant. CellCept can cause fetal abnormalities and birth defects. It is best to use two forms of birth control while you are on this medicine if there is any chance you could become pregnant. A second form of birth control is mandatory because Cellcept can also interfere with the effectiveness of birth control pills.

In summary, CellCept is a medication which often works very well for certain skin conditions and is usually well tolerated. If you have any other questions regarding this, please ask me before you leave the office.