

I can tell you about the medicines my child needs to take after the transplant.

After the transplant, your child will need to take medicine every day for the rest of his or her life. This can be hard to do at times, but it is very important. Your child needs to take medicines every day to keep the body from rejecting the new liver. These medicines are called immunosuppressive medications. Your child also needs to take medicine every day to fight off germs to prevent infections. Some children need other medicines, too, to stay healthy.

Members of your Transplant Team will teach you about your child's medicines, and you will get a written list. Before you leave the hospital, you will be able to tell a team member the names and reasons for each medicine, how much to give, what side effects to look for, and what to do if they occur. Medicine doses may be changed over time, based on results of lab tests.

You must keep your child's current medicine list with you and the child at all times.

Every medicine has some possible side effects. Your child will not get every side effect, but we want you to know what to look for and what to do if you see one. If you want to give your child any medicine not on this list, check with the Transplant Team first. Mixing drugs that don't work well together can cause serious problems.

Here is information about some of the medicines your child may be given.

Prograf

Other name: Tacrolimus

Why is it given?

This medicine keeps your child's body from rejecting the new liver. Another word for this is immunosuppressant.

What to do

- Give this medicine at the same time every day.
- If you give this medicine twice a day, give it every 12 hours (such as 8 am and 8 pm)
- You may give this medicine with or without food.
- If you give this medicine with food, always give it with food.
- Do not let your child eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice.

Things to know about this medicine

When your child is having blood drawn, do not give the morning prograf (Tacrolimus) dose until after blood is drawn.

What should I do if my child misses a dose of this medicine?

If your child misses a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, give only one dose. Do not give two doses to make up for a missed dose. If you have any questions, call the transplant center.

Possible side effects

- headaches
- loose stool (diarrhea)
- throwing up (vomiting)
- hair loss
- numb or tingling hands and feet
- high blood sugar (diabetes)
- low magnesium levels
- increased chance of getting an infection
- shaking that the child can't stop (tremors)
- sick to the stomach (nausea)
- loss of appetite
- trouble sleeping
- kidney damage
- high potassium levels
- seizures
- wounds take longer to heal than usual

Neoral

Other name: Cyclosporine

Why is it given?

This medicine keeps your child's body from rejecting the new liver. Another word for this is immunosuppressant.

What to do

- Give this medicine at the same time every day.
- Do not let your child eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice.

If your child take the liquid form of Neoral:

- Use a glass or hard plastic cup to mix the medication with milk or orange juice.
Do not use grapefruit juice
- Stir the medicine with a metal spoon.

Things to know about this medicine

Make sure the medicine you get when you refill looks like the medicine you've gotten before. This medicine comes in different strengths, and you want to get the right one every time.

When your child is having blood drawn, do not give the morning cyclosporine dose until after blood is drawn.

Possible side effects

- more hair grows on face
- gums grow bigger
- high blood pressure
- trouble sleeping
- headaches
- shaking that the child can't stop (tremors)
- numb or tingling hands and feet
- loose stool (diarrhea)
- sick to the stomach (nausea)
- high potassium levels

Sirolimus

Other names: Rapamune or Rapamycin

Why is it given?

This medicine keeps your child's body from rejecting the new liver. Another word for this is immunosuppressant.

Things to know about this medicine

When your child is having blood drawn, do not give the morning sirolimus dose until after blood is drawn.

Possible side effects

- triglyceride and cholesterol levels go up
- wounds take longer to heal than usual
- pimples on the face
- platelet count goes down

Cellcept

Other name: Mycophenolate Mofetil

Why is it given?

This medicine keeps your child's body from rejecting the new liver. Another word for this is immunosuppressant.

What to do:

- Can be taken with food.
- Do not take this medicine within 2 hours of a magnesium supplement.

Possible side effects

- headache
- loose stool (diarrhea)
- sick to the stomach (nausea)
- throwing up (vomiting)
- not hungry (loss of appetite)
- low white cell count
- low platelet count
- increased chance of getting an infection

Call your doctor right away if your child:

- has any unusual bruising or bleeding
- This medicine is not safe for pregnant women. It can harm the developing baby.
Call the transplant center if you think your child is pregnant.

What should I do if my child misses a dose of this medicine?

If your child misses a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, give only one dose. Do not give two doses to make up for a missed dose. If you have any questions, call the Transplant Team.

Prednisone

Other names: Prednisolone, Prelone or Orapred

Why is it given?

Prednisone is given to help keep your body from rejecting your new liver. It is a steroid and an immunosuppressant.

What to do:

- Give prednisone with food. If given without food it could upset the stomach.

What should I do if my child misses a dose of this medicine?

If your child misses a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, give only one dose. Do not give two doses to make up for a missed dose. If you have any questions, call the transplant center.

Possible side effects

- hungry
- trouble sleeping
- sweating
- muscle weakness
- mood changes
- trouble healing
- pimples
- swelling; holds fluids
- face looks fatter
- stomach ulcers
- high blood sugar
- high blood pressure
- changes in eye sight
- hair gets thinner
- sensitive to the sun
- weak bones if high doses are taken for a long time

Call your doctor right away if your child:

- throws up blood
- has bloody stool

Bactrim

Other names: Septra, sulfamethoxazole with trimethoprim

Why is it given?

Bactrim is given to treat or prevent certain lung infections (pneumonia).

Things to know about this medicine

- Children allergic to sulfa should not take Bactrim. Tell your child's doctor if your child is allergic to sulfa. If your child has allergies to sulfa another medicine will be prescribed.
- This medicine makes the skin more sensitive to the sun. Always wear sunscreen when taking this medicine.

What should I do if my child misses a dose of this medicine?

If your child misses a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, give only one dose. Do not give two doses to make up for a missed dose. If you have any questions, call the transplant center.

Possible side effects

- sick to the stomach (nausea)
- throwing up (vomiting)
- not hungry (loss of appetite)
- headache
- upset stomach
- rash
- itching
- sensitive to the sun
- low white blood cell count

Call your doctor right away if your child gets a bad rash, especially around the eyes or mouth.

Cytovene or Valcyte

Other names: ganciclovir or valganciclovir

Why is it given?

Ganciclovir is used to prevent CMV (cytomegalovirus) or EBV (Epstein Barr Virus) disease. Ganciclovir may keep your child from getting CMV or make the illness milder. Valganciclovir is the liquid form of ganciclovir.

Things to know about this medicine

- It is best to take this medicine with food.
- This medicine will be given for 3 months after the transplant.
- If your child gets a CMV or EBV infection, this medicine will be given again.
- If your child is treated for rejection, this medicine will be given again.

What should I do if my child misses a dose of this medicine?

If your child misses a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, give only one dose. Do not give two doses to make up for a missed dose. If you have any questions, call the transplant center.

Possible side effects

- fever
- rash
- shaking that the child can't stop (tremors)
- confusion
- low white cell count
- kidney damage
- upset stomach (if given by mouth)

Diffucan

Other name: fluconazole

Why is it given?

This medicine is given to treat or prevent an infection caused by a fungus, such as yeast and Valley Fever. Another word for this is antifungal.

Things to know about this medicine

- Do not change this medicine unless your transplant doctor tells you to.
- This medicine affects the way your child's body handles the medicine Prograf.
- This medicine may make birth control pills (oral contraceptives) not work well.
A person taking this medicine should not take birth control pills.

What should I do if my child misses a dose of this medicine?

If your child misses a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, give only one dose. Do not give two doses to make up for a missed dose. If you have any questions, call the transplant center.

Possible side effects

- loose stool (diarrhea)
- sick to the stomach (nausea)
- throwing up (vomiting)
- rash
- headache
- not hungry (loss of appetite)
- dizzy
- food may taste different

Baby Aspirin

Why is it given?

This medicine is given to prevent blood clots from forming in the blood vessels that supply the liver with blood.

Possible side effects

- upset stomach
- bleeding
- bruising
- body rash

Actigall

Other name: Ursodiol

Why is it given?

This medicine improves the flow of bile through the liver. It will help to prevent gallstones.

Possible side effects:

- loose stool (diarrhea)
- metallic taste in mouth.

Prevacid

Other name: Lansoprazole

Why is it given?

This medicine helps prevent stomach ulcers caused by steroids.

Possible side effects:

- headache
- loose stool (diarrhea)
- sick to the stomach (nausea)
- throwing up (vomiting)

Antacid

Other names: Pepcid, Zantac, Ranitidine, Prilosec, Omeprazole

Why is it given?

Antacids are given to help prevent stomach upset, ulcers, and heartburn.

Things to know about this medicine

- Give this medication in the evening or at bed time.

What should I do if my child misses a dose of this medicine?

If your child misses a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, give only one dose. Do not give two doses to make up for a missed dose. If you have any questions, call the transplant center.

Possible side effects

- hard dry stool (constipation)
- loose stool (diarrhea)
- sick to the stomach (nausea)
- throwing up (vomiting)

Call your doctor if your child has stomach aches or heartburn. Your child may need a different antacid.

Fer-in-Sol

Other name: Ferrous Sulfate

This increases the amount of iron in the red blood cells.

Possible side effects

- loose stool (diarrhea)
- upset stomach
- dark stool
- dark urine
- stained teeth

Some medicines that are given after the transplant may need to be given by IV. These may be given in the hospital or at home, by a Home Care Nurse.

Pentamidine

Children allergic to sulfa medications like Bactrim will receive a Pentamidine by IV once a month. This will help prevent the lungs from getting an infection (pneumonia) by the bacteria called *Pneumocystis carinii*. This may be given at home by a Home Care Nurse or in the clinic at Phoenix Children's Hospital, once a month for the first 3 months after transplant.

If your child has other medical problems or develops other medical problems, other medicines will be given in addition to the liver transplant medicines. For example, some children have diabetes or high blood pressure.

Your child may need antibiotics before having some types of dental work. At least one week before your child's dental appointment, tell the Clinical Transplant Coordinator. If a prescription for an antibiotic is needed, the transplant coordinator will call your pharmacy with the prescription.

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.