

CICLOSPORIN EYE DROPS (Ikervis[®] & Verkazia[®])

Traffic light classification- **Amber 2** Information sheet for Primary Care Prescribers

Therapeutic Summary

Approved by [NICE TA369](#). Dry eye disease may be considered to have an inflammatory immunological mechanism. Ciclosporin has been shown to have an anti-inflammatory effect. Following ocular administration, ciclosporin is passively absorbed into T-lymphocyte infiltrates in the cornea and conjunctiva and inactivated calcineurin phosphatase. Ciclosporin-induced inactivation of calcineurin inhibits the dephosphorylation of the transcription factor NF-AT and prevents NF-AT translocation into the nucleus, thus blocking the release of pro-inflammatory cytokines such as IL-2.

Medicines Initiation

AMBER 2 – medication is suitable for prescribing in primary care following specialist initialisation once the patient has been stabilised on treatment. Ophthalmologist must send information sheet with indication for use and likely duration of treatment. This is a supporting material for those responsible for continuing supply in primary care. These eye drops should be prescribed by brand.

Products available

- Ikervis[®] - Ciclosporin 1mg/ml eye drops [emulsion] (30x0.3ml single dose, single-use containers, £72.00, BNF online, March 2022).
- Verkazia[®] - Ciclosporin 1 mg/ ml eye drops (120x 0.3ml, single dose, single-use containers, £288.00, BNF online, March 2022).

Each dose container is sufficient to treat both eyes, any unused emulsion should be discarded immediately.

Explicit criteria for review and discontinuation of the medicine

Review/discontinuation of therapy should be carried out by the corneal/external eye disease specialist in secondary care. Treatment should be discontinued after signs and symptoms are resolved and reinitiated upon their recurrence.

Information given to patient

- Mild irritation in the first few days of treatment may occur.
- Wash hands before and after use.
- Medication should be stored below 25°C, unused contents of each container should be discarded immediately.
- After opening the aluminium pouches the single-dose containers should be kept in the pouch to protect from light and avoid evaporation (one pouch contains five single-dose containers).
- After eye drops application, keep eyes closed for 2 minutes to increase local drug action and reduce systemic absorption.
- Patients and carers should be counselled on the effects on driving and performance of skilled tasks—increased risk of blurred vision.

Product name & form	Ciclosporin 1mg/ml eye drops [emulsion] (Ikervis®)	Ciclosporin 1mg/ml eye drops [emulsion] (Verkazia®)
Patient Groups	Adults above 18 years of age	Children and adolescents age 4 to 18
Indications of Use	Severe keratitis that has not improved despite treatment with tear substitutes in adults.	Vernal keratoconjunctivitis (VKC) in children and adolescents.
Dose	The recommended dose is ONE drop to the affected eye(s) at bedtime	The recommended dose is one drop up to four times a day and can be reduced accordingly to control signs and symptoms.
Duration of Treatment	Treatment with ciclosporin is long term – where a specific course length is required this should be communicated in the GP letter. Patient will be reviewed every 6 months by the eye specialist in secondary care. Ensure that repeat prescriptions will guarantee continuation of treatment until review.	
Cautions	<p>Contact lens wear should be avoided unless under specialist advice. If the eye drops are being instilled once daily at bedtime, the contact lenses should be removed before instillation of the eye drops and may be reinserted after waking up the next morning.</p> <p>Wash hands after use.</p> <p>Avoid use in pregnancy and during breastfeeding.</p>	
Contraindications	Hypersensitivity to the active substance or to any of the excipients. Active or suspected ocular or peri-ocular infection, ocular or peri-ocular malignancies or premalignant conditions. If patient develops an eye infection withhold ciclosporin treatment and refer to specialist	
Side Effects	Common adverse reactions include eye pain (19%), eye irritation (17.8%), lacrimation (6.2%), ocular hyperaemia (5.5%) and eyelid erythema (1.7%) which were usually transitory and occurred during instillation.	Side effects from therapy are likely to be localised, transitory and mild to moderate in severity. The most common adverse reactions in the clinical trials were eye pain (11%) and eye pruritus (9%).
Monitoring	No specific monitoring of patients is required as systemic absorption is minimal.	
Clinically relevant medicine interactions and their management	<p>No interaction studies have been performed with Ikervis® or Verkazia®, although for Ikervis® BNF lists pomelo juice as a possible factor increasing ciclosporin exposure, and purple grape juice is predicted to decrease ciclosporin exposure.</p> <p>Co-administration of ciclosporin with eye drops containing corticosteroids could potentiate the effects of ciclosporin on the immune system.</p> <p>For further information on contraindications, precautions, adverse effects and interactions refer to the BNF or Summary Product Characteristics for Ikervis® or for Verkazia®.</p>	
Follow up	Patients must be reviewed at least every 6 months by a specialist in ophthalmology	
Excipients	Contains cetalkonium chloride, medium-chain triglycerides, glycerol, tyloxapol, poloxamer 188, sodium hydroxide (to adjust pH) and water for injections.	Contains cetalkonium chloride, medium-chain triglycerides, glycerol, tyloxapol, poloxamer 188, sodium hydroxide (to adjust pH) and water for injection.
PIL	Ikervis®	Verkazia®

REFERENCES

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Version Control- Ciclosporin Eye Drops- Information sheet for Primary Care Prescribers			
Version	Author(s)	Date	Changes
1.1	Michalina Ogejo - Specialist Interface and Medicines Optimisation Pharmacist	March 2022	Combined Ikervis [®] and Verkazia [®] information sheets into one, and addition of the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After eye drops application, keep eyes closed for 2 minutes to increase local drug action and reduce systemic absorption. • Patients and carers should be counselled on the effects on driving and performance of skilled tasks— increased risk of blurred vision • Avoid use in pregnancy and during breastfeeding. • Ikervis[®] brand - BNF lists pomelo juice as a possible factor increasing ciclosporin exposure, and purple grape juice is predicted to decrease it. • Ciclosporin eye drops should be prescribed by brand. • Extended list of references with added websites links.