



Antifungal Medication Information

Why would I have to take antifungals post-transplant?

After your transplant you are at a higher risk of developing infections. This is because the drugs we give you to prevent rejection also prevent your body from being able to fight off some infections. We give you antifungal medications to prevent the development of common fungal infections posttransplant.

What antifungals will I have to take after my transplant?

There are a few common antifungals that are used post transplant. Diflucan® (fluconazole) is used in our liver transplant recipients. This is an oral antifungal that is taken once a day. Nystatin or clotrimazole are other antifungals that are commonly used in the kidney or kidney/pancreas transplant recipients. Nystatin is a liquid that you take orally four times a day. You have to swish it around in your mouth for a few seconds then swallow it. You can not eat or drink for 20 minutes after you take your nystatin. If the nystatin makes you feel really sick we can sometimes try clotrimazole instead. We prefer to use the nystatin because the clotrimazole can increase some of your drug levels. The clotrimazole is a troche that you have to let dissolve in your mouth three times daily. You can not chew it or swallow it whole.

What are antifungals used for?

All three of these antifungals are used to prevent thrush. Thrush is a common fungal infection seen posttransplant that occurs in the mouth. It looks like a white cakey substance is stuck to the tongue. Diflucan® can also be used to prevent blood and urine fungal infections as well.

How long will I have to take antifungals?

Liver transplant recipients stay on likely stay on Diflucan® for three months. Kidney and kidney/pancreas recipients that receive Nystatin or clotrimazole and will usually only need to stay on it for 1 month.

Do antifungals interact with any other drugs?

Yes. Diflucan® can increase the levels of many drugs including your other immunosuppressants such as cyclosporine, tacrolimus and sirolimus. We will monitor your drug levels closely when you stop this medication and will make appropriate dose adjustments. Make sure your doctor knows you are on Diflucan® if they need to start drugs such as Dilantin® (for seizures), Coumadin® (blood thinner) or Digoxin (heart medicine).

Are there side effects to the antifungals?

All of the antifungals can cause some nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Diflucan® may also cause a headache and rash.

Please direct your medication questions to
your transplant coordinator or transplant pharmacist.