

Medication caveats after a Kidney Transplant

There are not many choices for taking immunosuppressants after the kidney transplant.

The common immunosuppressants are:

- **Ciclosporin**
- **Prograf (tacrolimus)**
- **Rapamune (Sirolimus)**
- **Cellcept (mycophenolate mofetil):**
- **Steroids (corticosteroids)**

All these medications come with the side effects. Therefore it is important to understand what would work better for you before you go on long term with one of these medications. Right after the transplant, your nephrologist may put you on any medication that will suit you the best and he/she will provide you choices for long term treatment. We did some analysis and found the following side effects that these medications could have. Please note that every body works differently so you may not experience same side effects as the other person. But these side effects are well known.

➤ **Ciclosporin:**

This in long run is toxic to kidneys. So you should either move on to Prograf or Rapamune in the long run.

➤ **Prograf (tacrolimus):**

This increases your blood sugar, and your blood work will indicate high sugar levels or diabetic symptoms. You may need to go on medication to prevent diabetes.

➤ **Rapamune (Sirolimus):**

This increases your cholesterol levels and you will need to go on cholesterol lowering drugs like Simvastatin, Lipitor etc. The most important side effect of Rapamune is that over a long period of time 5 years or so, the drug is resistant to healing. If you undergo a surgery, Rapamune will impede the healing process. If you go on any abdominal surgery, you will have high risk of getting HERNIA. This medication can put you at a risk of getting a rare type of brain infection. If you have trouble understanding things or seem delusional, contact your nephrologist.

➤ **Cellcept (mycophenolate mofetil):**

This drug is also used to prevent the rejection of transplanted kidney. Cellcept in combination with other immunosuppressant and corticosteroids will prevent the rejection. As Cellcept weakens the immune system, the patient is vulnerable to several infections. Cellcept can cause Cytomegalovirus (CMV) as a result you may get major infections. Fungal infections are also common while you are on Cellcept. A possible brain infection progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML) can impair the whole body system.

➤ **Steroids (corticosteroids)**

This drug is given in combination with other immunosuppressants to make the drug combination effective and prevent kidney rejection.

Chronic Kidney diseases are common but treatable. Please create awareness to save millions of lives across the globe.

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