

Tacrolimus Suppository for Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Information for patients

This information leaflet is about Tacrolimus suppository and what the medication is for, how to use the medication, possible side effects, monitoring and storage. If you have any queries or concerns, please speak to your home doctor (GP), nurse or pharmacist.

What is Tacrolimus suppository used for?

You have been prescribed Tacrolimus suppository for your Proctitis (inflammation in the rectum), when other standard treatment has failed to improve your symptoms.

It belongs to a group of medications called immunosuppressants. In inflammatory bowel disease, the body's immune system overacts and causes inflammation in the bowel. Immunosuppressants like Tacrolimus can help to reduce inflammation and alleviate associated symptoms.

What is Tacrolimus suppository?

Tacrolimus suppository is a small, bullet-shaped medication that you insert into the rectum. It melts in the rectum and is absorbed locally by the inflamed tissue, and some may also be absorbed into your blood stream.

Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your name and date of birth and check your ID band. If you do not have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address. If we do not ask these questions, then please ask us to check. Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

How do I use the Tacrolimus suppository?

Use one 2mg suppository twice a day – one suppository in the morning and one suppository at bedtime.

Do not swallow tacrolimus suppository.

1. Go to toilet to empty your bowels first before using the suppository.
2. Clean your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
3. Take suppository out from the packaging.
4. Get in a position where you can access your bottom. You can use any of the following positions:
 - a. Lie on your side with your knees bent towards your chest
 - b. Squat down.
 - c. Stand with one leg raised on a chair.
5. Use your finger to gently push the suppository into the rectum (back passage), the round end goes in first. Push in until it passes the tight muscle of the bottom which is around 2.5cm deep. A water-based lubricant may be used to make the insertion easier.
6. Remain lying down or stand still for 15 to 20 minutes to keep the suppository in place and to allow it to dissolve in your anus. You can clench your buttocks together, especially when you feel like the suppository is coming out.
7. If the suppository does come out, repeat the process with a new suppository. Do not insert the same suppository back in.
8. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
9. Try to avoid pooing for at least one hour after inserting the suppository to help the body to absorb the medication.

Where do I get tacrolimus suppository?

Tacrolimus suppository is a hospital-only medication that will be prescribed by your inflammatory bowel disease doctor or healthcare professional. The prescription will be sent to the Outpatient Pharmacy.

If your treatment is longer than four weeks, your doctor will prescribe a new prescription four weeks at a time to be picked up from Outpatient Pharmacy.

How long should I use Tacrolimus suppository for?

Usually for four weeks, but sometimes the duration may vary depending on your condition. If treatment continues for longer than four weeks, your inflammatory bowel disease team will arrange for a new prescription to be sent to Outpatient Pharmacy.

What if I forgot to use my Tacrolimus suppository?

If you forgot to use a dose, wait until it's time for the next dose, and continue to use as normal. Never use two suppositories to make up a missed dose.

Are there any side effects?

As with all medications, Tacrolimus suppository can cause side effects, but it may be different for different people, and some people may not get them. It is important that you report anything you feel unusual.

This is not a full list of side effects, if you want to know more about side effects, please contact your inflammatory bowel disease team.

Some common side effects:

- Diarrhoea
- Feeling sick
- Vomiting
- Indigestion
- Tummy cramps
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Changes to vision or increased sensitivity to light
- Trembling
- Skin rashes
- Sleeping difficulties
- Changes to hair growth
- Changes to heart rate
- Changes to blood sugar
- Changes to blood pressure.

Do not drive or operate machinery if you feel dizzy, drowsy and changes in vision.

Contact your inflammatory bowel disease team or GP immediately if you get:

- Unexplained sore throat
- Unexplained bruising or bleeding
- High temperature
- Yellowing of skin and eyes
- Breathlessness
- Severe tummy ache
- Severe diarrhoea
- Any other symptoms that are new and concerning you.

Special precautions:

- Tacrolimus can increase the risk of skin cancer for some people, therefore ensure that you use appropriate sun protection, including using SPF 50 broad spectrum sunscreen, and wearing a hat, sunglasses and protective clothing when you are in the sun. Check your skin regularly and report any new mole or existing mole that changes in appearance, becomes crusty, inflamed, painful, bleeding or itchy.
- You should avoid live vaccines whilst using tacrolimus.
- You should have your annual flu vaccine and COVID vaccine. Also speak with your GP regarding any other vaccinations that you may be eligible for whilst you are on tacrolimus suppositories.

- If you come in contact with someone who has chickenpox or shingles and you have never had chickenpox yourself before, contact your GP or specialist team.
- Talk to your inflammatory bowel disease team before you planning to get pregnant and breastfeeding.

Do I need to take blood tests whilst using Tacrolimus suppository?

You would need blood tests before and during the treatment to check if you are suitable for the treatment, to see if the treatment is working for you, and to monitor any side effects.

You will need full blood count, renal function test, liver function test, and tacrolimus level (pre-dose) within 10 - 14 days after you start your therapy. Any further tests will depend on the duration of your treatment.

If other tests are required, you will be informed by your inflammatory bowel disease team.

Can I take other medicines with Tacrolimus suppository?

Tacrolimus has interactions with some medications and herbal medicines, it is important you provide the full list of medications you are taking to your Doctors, Nurses and Pharmacists.

If you buy any medications or herbal medicines over the counter, please tell your pharmacists you are using Tacrolimus suppository.

Do I need to avoid any food and drink?

- Grapefruit or grapefruit juice
- Unpasteurised food
- Alcohol can affect your liver, limit the amount you drink to prevent liver damage. Or do not drink at all if your GP has recommended you to not to. Alcohol can also make some side effects worse.

How should I store Tacrolimus suppositories?

The suppositories should be stored in a cool dry dark place below 25°C, away from direct sunlight, in their original packaging.

Keep out of reach of children.

Always check expiry date on the product, this product has a short expiry date.

Further information and support

If you have any concerns and queries and would like to speak to someone in the gastroenterology team, you can contact by telephone or email:

During normal working hours: **Monday to Friday, 9am to 5:30pm**

Inflammatory Bowel Disease Helpline: **020 3299 1606**

Gastroenterology Pharmacist Email: **kch-tr.kchpharmacy-gastropharmacist@nhs.net**

MyChart

Our MyChart app and website lets you securely access parts of your health record with us, giving you more control over your care. To sign up or for help, call us on 020 3299 4618 or email kings.mychart@nhs.net. Visit www.kch.nhs.uk/mychart to find out more.

Sharing your information

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has partnered with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust through the King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas' hospitals. King's College Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trusts share an electronic patient record system, which means information about your health record can be accessed safely and securely by health and care staff at both Trusts. For more information visit www.kch.nhs.uk.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your GP or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

Tel: **020 3299 4618**

Email: kings.pals@nhs.net

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Interpreting and Accessible Communication Support on 020 3299 4618 or email kings.access@nhs.net