Cyclosporine
Ophthalmic

Optimmune® is another name for this medication.

How Is This Medication Useful?
- Cyclosporine is a strong immune-suppressing medication that is used to treat dry eye in dogs and may also be useful in treating other inflammatory diseases of the eye such as pannus in German Shepherds or chronic uveitis (Moon blindness) in horses. It does not cure these conditions and must be given for the rest of the animal’s life.

Are There Conditions or Times When Its Use Might Cause More Harm Than Good?
- Cyclosporine may prevent healing of ulcers of the clear part of the eye (cornea) and should be used with caution in animals who have an eye ulcer.
- Some dogs do not respond to the ointment form of the drug and must receive the drops. Cyclosporine drops will have to be specially formulated by a compounding pharmacist as they are not commercially available.
- It can cause weakening of the human immune system, so you should wear gloves or wash hands after applying this medication to your pet’s eye.

What Side Effects Can Be Seen With Its Use?
- Cyclosporine has few side effects when applied to the eye.

How Should It Be Given?
- Cyclosporine ointment is used every 12 hours for the rest of the pet’s life.
- If you are giving more than one eye medication, you should allow 5 minutes between medications to allow the medication to work and to not be washed out by the next medication.
- Medication should be applied in the lower eyelid sac (conjunctival sac) without touching the tip of the dropper or tube to the eye as this will contaminate the medication. Do not touch the dropper or tube tip with your fingers as this will also contaminate the medication.

- The successful outcome of your animal’s treatment with this medication depends upon your commitment and ability to administer it exactly as the veterinarian has prescribed. Please do not skip doses or stop giving the medication. If you have difficulty giving doses consult your veterinarian or pharmacist who can offer administration techniques or change the dosage form to a type of medication that may be more acceptable to you and your animal.
- If you miss a dose of this medication you should give it as soon as you remember it, but if it is within a few hours of the regularly scheduled dose, wait and give it at the regular time. Do not double a dose as this can be toxic to your pet.
- Some other drugs can interact with this medication so tell your veterinarian about any drugs or foods that you currently give your animal. Do not give new foods or medications without first asking your veterinarian.
- You should always wash your hands after applying this medication to your pet’s eyes.

Dogs and Cats: Cyclosporine is usually administered twice daily as an ointment for the rest of the pet’s life.

Horses: Horses will usually receive cyclosporine as an ointment administered once or twice daily. Some veterinary ophthalmologists may implant a bead of cyclosporine inside your horse’s eye instead of having you use ointment twice daily.

What Other Information Is Important About This Medication?
- Cyclosporine should be stored in a tight, light resistant, childproof container away from all children and other household pets. It should not be refrigerated.
- Cyclosporine drops will have to be specially formulated by a compounding pharmacist and may be expensive. You should call for refills well ahead of the time you need them to ensure that the pharmacist has had time to make this eye drop.
- Your horse’s eye(s) should start to look better in 48 hours. If the eye looks the same or gets worse, you should contact your veterinarian for advice.