NOVARTIS

IMPORTANT PRESCRIBING INFORMATION ABOUT *myfortic*® (mycophenolic acid) delayed-release tablet

Subject: New *myfortic* Medication Guide to Be Distributed by Pharmacists

March 2009

Dear Healthcare Professional:

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation would like to inform you of the introduction of a *myfortic* Medication Guide that has been developed in conjunction with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to provide important safety and efficacy information in language that patients can easily comprehend. As required by the FDA regulations, by May 15, 2009, a copy of the *myfortic* Medication Guide will be enclosed with every *myfortic* bottle. Pharmacists are required to distribute a copy of the *myfortic* Medication Guide with every *myfortic* prescription. Please note that the *myfortic* Medication Guide is consistent with the currently approved US *myfortic* complete Prescribing Information and does not reflect any new safety information.

At Novartis, patient safety is our highest priority and we are committed to ensuring that healthcare professionals continue to have the information necessary to prescribe *myfortic* appropriately. Enclosed are copies of the *myfortic* Medication Guide and the complete Prescribing Information. Please carefully review this information.

The *myfortic* Medication Guide can also be obtained on the Internet at www.myfortic.com or by calling 1-888-NOW-NOVA (1-888-669-6682). Please contact Novartis if you have any questions about this information or the safe and effective use of *myfortic*.

Healthcare professionals should report all serious adverse events suspected to be associated with the use of *myfortic* to Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, One Health Plaza, East Hanover, NJ 07936 or by phone at 1-888-NOW-NOVA (1-888-669-6682), Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM EST.

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation
One Health Plaza
East Hanover, NJ 07936

Alternatively, this information may be reported to the FDA's MedWatch Reporting System by phone at 1-800-FDA-1088, by facsimile at 1-800-FDA-0178, or by mail using the form 3500 available at http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/index.html.

Important Information About *myfortic*® (mycophenolic acid) delayed-release tablet

Indication:

myfortic is indicated for the prophylaxis of organ rejection in patients receiving allogeneic renal transplants, administered in combination with cyclosporine and corticosteroids.

Contraindications:

myfortic is contraindicated in patients with a hypersensitivity to mycophenolate sodium, mycophenolic acid, mycophenolate mofetil, or to any of its excipients.

Important Safety Information:

WARNING: Immunosuppression may lead to increased susceptibility to infection and possible development of lymphoma and other neoplasms. Only physicians experienced in immunosuppressive therapy and management of organ transplant recipients should use *myfortic*® (mycophenolic acid) delayed-release tablet. Patients receiving *myfortic*® should be managed in facilities equipped and staffed with adequate laboratory and supportive medical resources. The physician responsible for maintenance therapy should have complete information requisite for the follow-up of the patient.

Female users of childbearing potential must use contraception. Use of *myfortic*® during pregnancy is associated with increased risks of pregnancy loss and congenital malformations.

- Patients receiving immunosuppressive regimens involving combinations of drugs, including *myfortic*®, as part of an immunosuppressive regimen are at increased risk of developing lymphomas and other malignancies, particularly of the skin
- Oversuppression of the immune system can also increase susceptibility to infection, including opportunistic infections, fatal infections, and sepsis
- Cases of progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML), sometimes fatal, have been reported in patients treated with mycophenolate mofetil (MMF). Hemiparesis, apathy, confusion, cognitive deficiencies, and ataxia were the most frequent clinical features observed. MMF is metabolized to MPA, the active ingredient in *myfortic*® and the active form of the drug. The reported cases generally had risk factors for PML, including treatment with immunosuppressant therapies and impairment of immune functions. In immunosuppressed patients, physicians should consider PML in the differential diagnosis in patients reporting neurological symptoms and consultation with a neurologist should be considered as clinically indicated. Consideration should be given to reducing the amount of immunosuppression in patients who develop PML. In transplant patients, physicians should also consider the risk that reduced immunosuppression represents to the graft (See **WARNINGS**, **Infections**)
- Mycophenolic acid can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman. A patient who is planning a pregnancy should not use *myfortic*® unless she cannot be successfully

treated with other immunosuppressant drugs. Risks and benefits of *myfortic*® and alternative immunosuppressants should be discussed with the patient. If this drug is used during pregnancy, or if the patient becomes pregnant while taking this drug, the patient should be apprised of the potential hazard to the fetus

- Women of childbearing potential (including pubertal girls and peri-menopausal women) taking *myfortic*® must receive contraceptive counseling and use effective contraception. The patient should begin using her two chosen contraceptive methods 4 weeks prior to starting *myfortic*® therapy, unless abstinence is the chosen method. She should continue contraceptive use during therapy and for 6 weeks after stopping *myfortic*®. Patients should be aware that *myfortic*® reduces blood levels of the hormones in the oral contraceptive pill and could theoretically reduce its effectiveness
- Patients receiving *myfortic*® should be monitored for neutropenia. If neutropenia develops (ANC $<1.3 \times 10^3/\mu L$), dosing with *myfortic*® should be interrupted or the dose reduced, appropriate diagnostic tests performed, and the patient managed appropriately (see **DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**)
- Gastrointestinal bleeding (requiring hospitalization) has been reported in *de novo* renal transplant patients (1.0%) and maintenance patients (1.3%) treated with *myfortic*® (mycophenolic acid) (up to 12 months)
- The principal adverse reactions associated with the administration of *myfortic*® include constipation, nausea, and urinary tract infection in *de novo* patients and nausea, diarrhea, and nasopharyngitis in maintenance patients. Common adverse events reported in ≥20% of patients receiving *myfortic*® or mycophenolate mofetil in the 12-month *de novo* renal study and maintenance renal study, when used in combination with cyclosporine, USP (MODIFIED) and corticosteroids, are listed in Table 4 of the **ADVERSE REACTIONS** section of the *myfortic*® Prescribing Information

Please see the enclosed *myfortic* complete Prescribing Information, which includes additional information for **Warnings**, **Precautions**, and **Dosage and Administration**.

If you have any questions about this information or the safe and effective use of *myfortic*, please contact Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation at 1-888-NOW-NOVA (1-888-669-6682), Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM EST.

Sincerely,

✍ Stephen R. Cunningham, MD
Chief Scientific Officer and Head
US Clinical Development and Medical Affairs
Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation

Enclosures:
myfortic complete Prescribing Information
myfortic Medication Guide

