

Corticosteroids (Prednisone[®], Decadron[®], Cortisone[®])

Corticosteroids are used to treat certain types of cancer, reduce inflammation, reduce swelling, treat allergic reactions and help control nausea caused by chemotherapy.

How Is It Given?

- by mouth
- by IV (intravenous)

What Side Effects May Occur?

This is a partial list of the side effects you may have with this medicine. You may have some, all or none of those listed, or you may have other side effects not listed. Most side effects last only a short time.

Common:

- insomnia (unable to get to sleep or stay sleeping) or restlessness
- increased energy, euphoria
- fluid retention, weight gain
- increased appetite
- impaired defense against infections
- stomach irritation
- mood swings
- increased blood glucose levels
- irregular or lack of menstrual cycles
- headache
- dizziness

Less common:

- blurred vision
- acne
- thin skin
- increased hair growth

Special Notes

- When taking this medicine by mouth, take it with food.
- When you stop taking this medicine after taking it for a long time, you may have symptoms of withdrawal. These include muscle aches, fatigue and depression. If you have these symptoms, call your doctor. Do not stop taking this medicine without first checking with your doctor.
- If you have a personal or family history of diabetes or high blood pressure, it is important to check your blood glucose, blood pressure or both while taking this medicine.
- While taking corticosteroids, you may get infections more easily. Tell your doctor or nurse about any signs of cough, sore throat or other discomfort.

- Some medicines interact with corticosteroids. Let your doctor know if you are taking any of the following:
 - aspirin
 - salicylates
 - barbiturates such as phenobarbital, pheytoin (Dilantin[®])
 - rifampin (Rifadin[®], Rimactane[®]).

When To Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor if you have:

- fever or sore throat
- pain when going to the bathroom
- muscle aches
- hallucinations
- sudden mood changes
- bloody or black stools
- blurred vision, eye pain
- skin rash
- unusual thirst
- swollen feet or ankles.

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you want more complete medicine information or if you have questions.