



# Corticosteroids

## Information For Patient With Glomerulonephritis

Generic Name	Brand Name
Prednisone (PRED-ni-sone) Tablets	
Methylprednisolone(METH il pred NIS oh lone) Injection	Solumedrol®

### What are Corticosteroids and why are they being recommended for me?

- Corticosteroids are used to control diseases of the immune system such as glomerulonephritis (inflammation of the kidneys) or vasculitis (inflammation of the blood vessels).
- They work by lowering your immune system.
- They can reduce the leakage of protein from your kidneys into the urine.

### How should I take Corticosteroids?

- Corticosteroids can be taken as a tablet by mouth or can be given by intravenous (IV) infusion by a nurse. Your doctor will determine which formulation is most appropriate for you.

#### Prednisone Tablets

- The number of Prednisone tablets can change so make sure you are taking the correct dose.
- Prednisone should be taken once daily in the morning.
- Take Prednisone with food to prevent upset stomach.
- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. But, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and take the next dose at the regular time. Do not take 2 doses at the same time.
- Do not suddenly stop taking Prednisone as your body will have become accustomed to receiving it and stopping it abruptly can cause life threatening low blood pressure in the event of stress. If you have been taking Prednisone for a long time, your doctor will slowly lower the dose so that your body gets used to receiving less Prednisone.

#### Methylprednisolone Infusion

- Dose and schedule of this medication are determined by your doctor.

### What monitoring will I need?

- The clinic will order regular blood tests and 24 hour urine collections to check your response to Corticosteroids and to monitor for side effects.

## What else do I need to know before taking Corticosteroids?

- Tell all members of your health care team that you are taking Corticosteroids or have taken Corticosteroids in the past.
- To prevent a specific, serious lung infection called pneumocystis jiroveci pneumonia (PJP), you may be prescribed an antibiotic if you are on a high dose of Corticosteroid therapy.
- Always contact the clinic before starting any new prescription and/or nonprescription medications (including vitamins and herbal products).
- Contact the clinic before receiving any vaccines. Corticosteroids may increase your chance of an infection and/or make the vaccine not work as well.

## What are the possible side effects of Corticosteroids?

- All medications may cause side effects; however, many people only experience mild side effects. Additionally, side effects may vary depending on the dose and duration of therapy. They will often improve as the dose is adjusted. Contact the clinic if you have any concerns about the following possible side effects:

## Side effects and what to do

	Side Effects
<b>Most Common</b> (10-20% of people experience)	<b>Increase in appetite and weight gain</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintaining a healthy diet and a regular exercise routine can help.</li></ul>
	<b>Stomach upset</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking Corticosteroids with food may help.</li><li>• To prevent stomach upset, you may be prescribed a medication that lowers the acidity in your stomach.</li></ul>
	<b>Changes in mood</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This includes irritability, depression, feeling stimulated, personality changes and difficulty concentrating.</li><li>• Let the clinic know if this is difficult to manage.</li></ul>
	<b>Difficulty sleeping</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking Corticosteroids in the morning will help minimize its impact on sleep.</li></ul>
	<b>Increase in blood sugar (diabetes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The clinic will monitor blood sugar levels regularly.</li><li>• Adjustment or addition of diabetes medication may be needed.</li></ul>
	<b>Increase in blood pressure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor your blood pressure regularly.</li><li>• Adjustment or addition of blood pressure medication may be needed.</li></ul>
	<b>Water retention or swollen ankles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If it becomes bothersome, please contact the clinic.</li><li>• Adjustment or addition of diuretic (water pill) medication may be needed.</li></ul>
	<b>Puffiness or rounding of the face and cheeks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This effect tends to go away a few months after Corticosteroid therapy is stopped.</li></ul>
	<b>Skin changes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This includes thinning of the skin, acne, stretch marks, bruising more easily and slower wound healing.</li></ul>

## Side effects and what to do (continued)

	Side Effects
<b>Less Common</b> (less than 10% of people experience)	<b>Headache</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to help with headaches.</li> </ul>
	<b>Irregular menstrual periods</b>
	<b>Muscle weakness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining a regular exercise routine can help with this.</li> </ul>
	<b>Increased risk of infection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corticosteroids lowers your body's ability to fight infection.</li> <li>• Avoid close contact with people who have an infection, a cold or the flu.</li> <li>• Wash your hands with soap often and/or use hand sanitizer.</li> <li>• Report any signs and symptoms of infection (such as fever, chills, bad sore throat, pain with urinating, etc.) to your doctor immediately.</li> </ul>
	<b>Unwanted facial hair growth (may be reversible)</b>
<b>Rare</b> (less than 1% of people experience)	<b>Weakening of the bones (osteoporosis)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will be prescribed calcium and vitamin D supplements to help maintain the health of your bones.</li> </ul>
	<b>Loss of bone tissue at the hip joints (osteonecrosis)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you develop an abrupt onset of hip, shoulder or knee pain, contact the clinic as soon as possible.</li> </ul>
	<b>Increase in eye pressure (glaucoma), blurry vision due to changes in the lens of the eye (cataracts)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you notice changes in your vision, contact the clinic immediately.</li> </ul>
	<b>Stomach ulcers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prevent stomach ulcers, you may be prescribed a medication that lowers the acidity in your stomach.</li> </ul>
	<b>Hallucinations and delusions (psychosis)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the clinic immediately or go to the emergency room.</li> </ul>

Questions? Contact the Clinic at: \_\_\_\_\_

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