



Skin Concept

PREDNISON INFORMATION

Prednisone is a form of cortico-steroids taken by mouth. It suppresses inflammation and immune response. It is used for a large number of severe inflammatory and autoimmune skin conditions such as severe dermatitis, vasculitis and autoimmune blistering conditions.

Dosage

The dose of prednisone is usually calculated by weight. The most common dose is 0.5mg/kg. However, up to 1mg/kg can be used in life threatening conditions.

Side Effects from a Short Course < 4 weeks

Common side effects:

Sleep disturbance

Increased appetite and weight gain

Fluid retention: leg swelling, raised blood pressure, weight gain

Psychological effects, increased or decreased energy

Rare but serious side effects:

Psychosis or mania

Heart failure

Peptic ulceration

Diabetes mellitus

Avascular necrosis of the hip or shoulder: destruction of the head of long bones

Side Effects from a Longer Course > 4 weeks

All of the above plus the following:

HPA axis suppression: suppression of normal amount of steroid hormone produced by your own body to deal with stress such as infection or trauma

Susceptibility to infections, you should avoid live vaccine

Osteoporosis or decrease bone density

Headache and raised intracranial pressure

Muscle Weakness

Diabetes

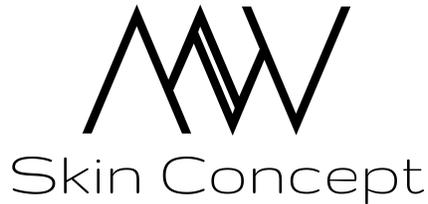
High blood pressure

Increased circulating blood fat e.g. triglycerides

Redistribution of body fat e.g. buffalo hump, truncal obesity

Glaucoma or cataract

Skin changes: acne, skin thinning and fragility, easy bruising, stretch marks



PREDNISONE INFORMATION Cont'd (Page 2 of 2)

Monitoring

Before you go on a longer course of high dose prednisone, blood tests including blood sugar, hepatitis screen and TB skin tests maybe performed. The following should be monitored on a regular basis.

Blood sugar
Blood pressure
Body weight
Intraocular pressure for glaucoma
DEXA bone scan for osteoporosis

Prevention of Osteoporosis

If you are taking more than 7.5mg of prednisone for more than 6 weeks or 5mg for more than 3 months, you will need to take measure to prevent bone loss.

1. Take 1200 mg elemental calcium daily and 1000iu Vitamin D
2. Avoid excessive alcohol consumption and stop smoking
3. Take regular weight bearing exercise for 30 minutes 3 times per week such as walking

Reduction of Dose

It is unsafe to stop oral prednisone abruptly if you have been taking them for more than 1 month. You would be asked to taper your steroid dose gradually, in general by 10mg every week. A much slower reduction maybe required for certain skin conditions.

To prevent the development of unwanted long-term side effects on high dose steroids, we will use the minimal dose that is required to keep your skin condition under control. In some cases, we will need to add another medication (steroid sparing agent such as azathioprine, methotrexate or mycophenolate mofetil) or phototherapy to your regime in order to keep your steroid dose to a safe level.

If you need more information or clarification, feel free to ask your dermatologist.

Y.W.Wong Oct 2013 Version 1.1