



GI Behavioral Health Program

Crohn's & Colitis Program

What is prednisone?

Prednisone is a corticosteroid medicine that is often referred to as a steroid. Every day our bodies naturally make cortisone, which is a steroid that is released in response to stress. This daily amount of cortisone our bodies make is equal to about 5 mg of prednisone. One of the many jobs of cortisone is to prevent the immune system from causing inflammation in the body. Prednisone is a medicine that is very similar to cortisone. It is an immunosuppressive medicine, which means it partially blocks the action of the immune system, but does not completely turn it off.

Prednisone is used to treat many different disorders, such as allergies, asthma, rashes, arthritis, lupus, psoriasis, as well as Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

Common side effects (adults):

- Feeling hungry a lot of the time
- Weight gain
- Trouble falling or staying asleep (insomnia)
- Mood changes (anxiety, crying, bad temper, anger)
- Blurry vision
- Increased body fat (especially in abdomen and the face)
- Swelling of legs and face
- Slow wound healing
- Acne (can be severe)
- Dry or thinning skin
- Easy bruising
- Increased sweating
- Increased blood sugar (especially in people with diabetes)
- Increased facial hair
- Menstrual problems
- Impotence
- Loss of interest in sex

Less common side effects:

- Dangerously high blood pressure (which can cause severe headaches, blurred vision, buzzing in ears, anxiety, confusion, chest pain, shortness of breath, uneven heartbeats)
- Extreme mood swings
- Depression
- Headache
- Personality changes
- Dizziness, flushing, stretch marks
- Osteoporosis
- Cataracts, Glaucoma
- Very slow wound healing
- Low level of potassium (symptoms include confusion, uneven heart rate, extreme thirst, increased urination, leg cramps, muscle weakness and limp feelings)
- Pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas that can cause severe pain in your upper stomach spreading to your back, nausea and vomiting, fast heart rate)
- Very high blood sugar

While taking prednisone, it is important to recognize the side effects and work with your medical or mental health provider to aid with coping and adjusting to these side effects!