



Prednisolone

Information for patients from Medicines Information

Your doctor has prescribed you prednisolone. This leaflet explains:

- what prednisolone is and why you may have been prescribed it
- what the possible side effects are; and
- what changes you may need to make to your lifestyle, while taking this medication.

Please use these instructions alongside advice from your doctor, pharmacist, or specialist nurse.

What is prednisolone?

Prednisolone is a steroid medication. It is used to treat various conditions by reducing inflammation and pain.

How do I take prednisolone?

- Follow your doctor's instructions, and **take prednisolone exactly as prescribed**.
- Dosage schedule:
 - Short-term use: follow your doctor's instructions to reduce the dose over time.
 - Long-term use: take prednisolone daily, as directed by your doctor.
- **Do not suddenly stop taking prednisolone.** Doing this can lead to serious medical emergencies, such as adrenal crisis or insufficiency. Always follow your doctor's instructions.
- If you need medical care, tell healthcare professionals exactly what dose you are taking.
- Carry your Steroid Emergency Card at all times. It provides important information during emergencies. Replacement cards are available from your pharmacist or doctor.

Tips for taking prednisolone

- To avoid stomach irritation, always take prednisolone with food.

- Cut down on how much alcohol you drink while taking prednisolone.
- Take prednisolone in the morning with breakfast, to avoid it disturbing your sleep.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember, unless it is close to the time for your next dose.
Do not double up on doses.

What are the possible side effects?

You may experience one or more of the following side effects. If you have any questions or concerns about these risks, please speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

- Increased appetite and weight gain. Eating a healthy balanced diet can help with this. For more information, read the **NHS Eat Well advice**. (<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>)
- Make a note of any mood or skin changes, and tell your doctor.
- If you have diabetes, monitor your blood sugar levels as they may increase.
- Long-term steroid use can suppress your immune system, increasing your risk of infection. Tell your doctor immediately if you have any signs of infection, like a sore throat or fever.
- Avoid contact with anyone who has chickenpox or shingles during treatment, and for up to 3 months after stopping prednisolone. This is because you may be more likely to catch infections.
- Long-term use of prednisolone increases the risk of osteoporosis, especially after menopause. Your doctor may prescribe you treatments to strengthen your bones.

Drug interactions and special precautions

- Always tell any doctor treating you that you are taking prednisolone.
- Speak to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new medications. This includes over-the-counter and complementary supplements.
- Speak to your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to be pregnant, or breastfeeding.

Important things to remember

- Make sure you have enough prednisolone to avoid running out.
- Always follow your doctor's advice.
- Complete the full course of treatment, even if you feel better.
- Regularly review your medication with your doctor. This is especially important if you are taking prednisolone long-term.

For more information, please speak to your pharmacist, doctor, or specialist nurse. Always read the patient information leaflet that came with your prescription.

For more information on taking prednisolone, please watch the following YouTube video **Prednisolone Steroid Medicines counselling**. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LUMm9d-IYA>)

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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