



## Allergy & Asthma Center

of Southern Oregon, PC

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## ORAL CORTICOSTEROID (“PREDNISONE”) INFORMATION SHEET

### USES OF ORAL CORTICOSTEROIDS

- 1.) Corticosteroids are anti-inflammatory, cortisone derivatives, often called “oral, inhaled or topical steroids” (these are not to be confused with the “anabolic steroids” used by athletes to increase muscle size; “anabolic steroids” used by athletes are male hormones and have no helpful anti-inflammatory effects for allergies).
- 2.) Cortisone is a corticosteroid naturally produced by your body and is necessary for normal body function (A lack of cortisone is called “Addison’s Disease”). When cortisone derivatives are given in somewhat larger doses they have anti-inflammatory effects.
- 3.) Asthma, rhinitis (inflammatory nasal disease or “Hay fever”), allergic conjunctivitis (eye itching), atopic dermatitis (skin eczema) etc. are caused by white blood cell over-activity causing inflammation in the involved tissues. Treatment with corticosteroids will decrease the inflammation and relieve the symptoms of the allergic diseases.

### TYPES OF CORTICOSTEROIDS

- 1.) When given in the tablet form, usually one of two types of corticosteroids is used: (a) prednisone (usually given as Deltasone brand); (b) methylprednisolone (usually prescribed as Medrol brand).
- 2.) Medrol and Deltasone are equally effective; Medrol is more expensive, but may at times cause slightly less nervousness, or fluid buildup in the body. Generally Prednisone (Deltasone) is preferred.

### THE PROPER WAYS TO USE YOUR CORTICOSTEROID PRESCRIPTION

- 1.) Use the medicine only as directed by your doctor. These medicines work best when used in a quick “burst” for 2-3 days or up to 7 days. Do not increase or decrease the dose or change the number of times per day you take these medications unless you first speak to the doctor.
- 2.) If at any time you are not sure what to do with your medication at any time, call the office for assistance.
- 3.) Usually corticosteroids are given at a constant dose for a few days (until your symptoms are completely under control) and then they will be quickly reduced (tapered) until they are stopped.

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