

## Oral Corticosteroids

BRAND NAME	GENERIC-NAME	DOSAGE FORM
Various brand names	Prednisone	Tablets: 5 & 50 mg
Pediapred®	Prednisolone	Liquid: 5 mg/5 mL
Medrol®	Methyl prednisolone	Tablets: 4 mg

Oral Corticosteroids (steroids) are very good at reducing inflammation (swelling) and mucous production in the airways of the lungs. They are the strongest anti-inflammatory medication. The steroids used to treat asthma are **not the same** as anabolic steroids used illegally by some athletes for bodybuilding!

Oral corticosteroids can be used as “**relievers**” in a short-term burst to treat severe respiratory symptoms. They take at least 3 hours to begin working and work best after 6 to 12 hours. A burst may last 5 to 14 days and does not require a decreasing dose, unless required more than 2 times in the past year.

Oral corticosteroids can be used as “**preventers**” to treat long-term, hard-to-control asthma. Your doctor will determine the smallest dose you require, and may tell you to take it daily, or every second day. The dose is taken at breakfast. **If you have been taking steroids for more than 2 weeks, do not stop your steroids abruptly**, the dose will need to be tapered before stopping.

**SIDE EFFECTS:** Common side effects with short-term treatment include:

SIDE EFFECT	MANAGEMENT
Stomach upset	Take your dose with food.
Fluid retention	Limit the amount of salt and foods that are high in sodium.
Increased appetite	Choose low-fat, low-calorie food to control calories.
Increased blood sugar	Talk with your physician.
Moodiness	Talk with your physician if moodiness or depression continues.
Increased blood pressure	Talk with your physician.
Avascular necrosis of the hip	Talk with your physician.

The use of long-term oral steroids, or frequent steroid bursts can cause a number of additional side effects including acne, weight gain, bone loss, easy bruising, and eye changes. If you are using long-term oral steroids, discuss the side effect profile with your doctor.

### MISSED DOSES:

Take the missed dose as soon as possible. If you do not remember until the next day, skip the missed dose. Do not double the next one.