

# ORAL CORTICOSTEROIDS



## ■ ■ ■ Description

Oral corticosteroids are used to decrease inflammation in various conditions. Although the intended target for this medication may be specific, the effects are global and can be seen in many organs. Among the most common conditions that are treated with oral steroids are skin problems, asthma, allergies, cancerlike conditions, arthritis, and many others. It is important that these medications be taken specifically as prescribed. Different conditions and different patients require different doses. Furthermore, these drug regimens are often concluded with tapering dosages, whereby the dose is gradually decreased.

## ■ ■ ■ Why Athletes Use It

As stated previously, various conditions can be successfully treated with steroids. Some of the more common conditions treated this way among athletes include allergic reactions and asthma. Some of these drugs may have varying degrees of anabolic effect and could be used to enhance performance by some athletes; however, the predominant effect is that of anti-inflammation.

## ■ ■ ■ Adverse Effects

- Rash
- Blurred vision
- Increased urination
- Unusual thirst

- Mood changes
- Headache
- Indigestion
- Increased appetite
- Restlessness
- Elevated glucose in persons with diabetes

## ■ ■ ■ Pharmacology

Oral steroids can be taken in pill and liquid forms. The same medication comes in injectable forms as well. There are both short- and long-acting forms. The prescriptions may be for short-pulse therapy or for long therapy, with dosages usually tapered down to gradually lower the dose.

## ■ ■ ■ Preventive Measures

Never take steroids without a written prescription from a physician or without physician supervision and follow-up. Do not miss doses and do not take extra doses. More is not better. Be sure to follow the details of the prescription, including any tapering at the end of a course. These drugs have multiple interactions with other drugs, so notify the prescribing physician or pharmacist of any other drugs you use. Always notify a treating physician that you are taking steroids if you develop a serious injury or illness. High-level doses may be needed in such cases to help your body cope with the stress of the acute illness.

Notes:

(Up to 4400 characters only)

Notes and suggestions