



## PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

### ORAL CORTICOSTEROIDS

**Cortisone acetate**  
**Hydrocortisone**  
**Dexamethasone**  
**Prednisolone**  
**Fludrocortisone**

### ABOUT your medicine

Your doctor has prescribed for you a corticosteroid (cortisone-like drug). This class of medicine is used to provide relief to inflamed areas of the body. They can reduce swelling, redness, itching and allergic reactions, and are often used for various conditions such as severe allergies, skin problems, asthma, some types of arthritis and autoimmune diseases (e.g. lupus).

Corticosteroids are naturally produced by our body and they are necessary for good health. If your body does not produce enough of these, your doctor may also prescribe them as replacement treatment.

Examples of oral corticosteroids include cortisone acetate, hydrocortisone, dexamethasone and prednisolone. These are available only with a doctor's prescription.

### HOW should I take the medicine?

Your doctor will tell you how much and how often to take the medicine. He will prescribe the lowest effective dose for you. Do not take more medicine or take it more often than your doctor tells you to as this may increase your risk of experiencing side-effects. You should not stop taking this medicine without first checking with your doctor as he may need to gradually reduce the dose taken before stopping completely.

Take this medicine with food to prevent stomach upset. You should also check with your doctor if you can drink alcohol when taking this medicine, as this may increase your risk of gastrointestinal problems.

### What should I do if I **FORGET** a dose?

If you miss a dose or forget to take your medicine, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule. Do not double the next dose to make up for the missed dose.

*Discard all medication that has expired or is no longer required*

*Keep all medications out of reach of children*

## What **PRECAUTIONS** should I take?

Before you take any corticosteroid tablet, please read the following questions. If your answer is YES to ANY of these questions, you MUST inform your doctor before taking this medicine.

- Are you pregnant or trying to become pregnant?
- Are you breastfeeding?
- Have you ever had a bad reaction to or are you allergic to any of the ingredients in this product?
- Are you being treated for any kind of infection at the moment?
- Have you ever been treated for tuberculosis?
- Do you have epilepsy?
- Do you, or does anyone in your family, have diabetes?
- Do you have high blood pressure?
- Do you suffer from kidney, liver or heart problems?
- Do you have osteoporosis (brittle/weak bones)?
- Do you, or does anyone in your family, have glaucoma?
- Do you have, or ever had stomach ulcers?
- Have you ever had a bad reaction to any steroid before, such as muscle weakness, or did your moods change in any way?

Tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and non prescription medications you are taking. You should also inform your doctor if you are receiving any vaccinations.

*Keep all medications out of reach of children*

You may get infections more easily while being treated with this medicine. Avoid crowded places or being near people who are sick. Avoid close contact with people who have chicken pox, shingles or measles. Call your doctor at once if you develop fever, sore throat or other signs of infection.

## What are the possible side effects of the medicine?

Consult your doctor as soon as possible if you have any of these side effects:

- Bloody or black, tarry stools
- Blurred vision
- Increased urination or thirst
- Muscle weakness or cramps
- Severe stomach pain

If you have problems with these less serious side effects, talk with your doctor:

- Confusion, depression or mood changes
- Fluid retention, weight gain
- Fullness or roundness of face
- Nausea, vomiting, indigestion
- Easy bruising

## How should **I STORE** my medicine?

Keep the medication in an airtight container. Store away from heat and direct sunlight.

