



Prednisone Medication Information

What is prednisone?

Prednisone is in the class of drugs known as immunosuppressants. This drug is used to suppress your immune system so your body does not reject your transplanted organ. Prednisone is used to treat many other diseases such as asthma or lupus.

Are there other names for prednisone?

Yes, prednisone may be referred to by one of its brand name which is Deltasone® or by its shorter original name pred.

Is prednisone available in a generic formulation or any other formulation that I should be aware of?

Yes, there are many different generic formulations of prednisone. You will like receive generic prednisone not brand name Deltasone® when you are discharged from the hospital.

How do I take prednisone?

Follow your physician's instructions carefully. Prednisone is usually only taken once a day. It is best to take it with food because it can upset your stomach. It is also preferable to take your prednisone in the morning as it may cause difficulty sleeping if it is taken too late.

What do I do if I missed a dose or I have a late clinic appointment?

Prednisone is only taken once a day so if you are late taking your dose it is ok to take it when you remember. You should take your prednisone before clinic appointments with your other medications.

Does prednisone interact with other drugs or food and beverages?

There aren't any significant drug interactions with prednisone.

What if I become pregnant, or are considering pregnancy or breast-feeding?

Some drugs are avoided during pregnancy due to the potential harm they may have on the unborn baby. The FDA has a grading system that lets you know how safe a drug is for your unborn child. It ranks drugs from A, where medical studies show no evidence for danger to the fetus or mother, to B, C, D and X, where the medical evidence indicates that the risk to the fetus outweighs any benefit to the mother. Prednisone is ranked C. Always consult your physician before taking any drug during or when planning pregnancy as your immunosuppression regimen may have to be changed during this time.

Are there other precautions that I need to be concerned about while taking prednisone?

When you take medications that suppress your immune system you are at an increased risk of infection, report promptly to your physician any indication of infection such as fever, sore throat, swollen glands, sores or lumps in the skin, abnormal bleeding or bruising. Avoid friends and family member that are sick,

Please direct your medication questions to
your transplant coordinator or transplant pharmacist.

ask them to wear a mask in your presence. Avoid live vaccines while taking this drug and avoid contact with individuals who have recently taken oral poliovirus vaccine. Also inform your physician if you have had a recent infection, especially chicken pox or shingles. Long term use of immunosuppressive medications may place you at a higher risk of developing certain types of cancers such as skin cancer, cervical cancer and lymphoma (lymph node cancer).

How long will I have to take prednisone?

If you were taking prednisone for a long time prior to your transplant you will likely stay on prednisone for at least 6 months or longer after your transplant. Most of our liver transplant recipients will stay on prednisone for 3 months. Kidney transplant recipients will likely only receive 6 days of prednisone while in the hospital and will not be discharged on this agent.

What kind of side effects could I have while taking prednisone?

Side effects can occur with any drug, even over-the-counter medications. Some of these side effects are mild where as other can be more severe. Minor reactions may resolve on their own but if they persist, contact your physician. For major reactions, you should contact your physician immediately.

For prednisone, the following are the observed side effects:

Minor:

- ▶ weight gain
- ▶ increased appetite
- ▶ tremors
- ▶ bruising of skin
- ▶ acne

Major:

- ▶ severe stomach pain
- ▶ nausea/vomiting
- ▶ high blood pressure
- ▶ elevated blood sugar
- ▶ mood changes
- ▶ psychosis
- ▶ cataracts
- ▶ bone loss

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