

Taking Prednisone: Your Daily Safety Guide

Pharmacology · Drug Classes & Mechanisms

Prednisone and similar medicines are steroids. They calm swelling and an overactive immune system. They help many health problems, but they need careful use.

Take it the right way

- Take it in the morning with breakfast or milk.
- Take it every day as directed. Do not skip doses.
- Missed a dose? Ask your pharmacist. **Never take 2 doses at once.**

Never stop suddenly

- After about 3 weeks, your body makes less of its own steroid.
- **Stopping suddenly is dangerous.** Your provider lowers the dose slowly.
- Your taper plan: _____.
- Refill early so you never run out.

Prevent infections

- Wash your hands often. Stay away from sick people.
- Call if you are near someone with chickenpox or measles.
- Ask your provider before any vaccine.

Watch your body

- If you have diabetes, check your blood sugar as told.
- Eat less salt. Check your weight and blood pressure.
- Mood swings and poor sleep are common. Tell your provider.

- Take calcium and vitamin D if prescribed. Get your eyes checked.
- Do not take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) unless approved.

Carry a steroid card

- Carry a card or wear a medical alert ID. Tell every provider and dentist.
- Call if you are sick, hurt, or need surgery. Your dose often needs to go up.

Call your provider today if you have

- Fever, sore throat, cough, or burning when you urinate
- High blood sugar, or much more thirst and urine
- Swelling, fast weight gain, or big mood changes
- A wound that will not heal

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- Severe weakness, dizziness, or fainting
- Vomiting, and you cannot keep your steroid down
- Confusion, or bad belly pain with vomiting
- Black, tarry stool or vomiting blood

This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.

Online: nclexpace.com/patient-education/prednisone-steroid-safety/patient

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