



## **ORAL STEROIDS- Side Effects**

### **What are Oral Steroids?**

You have been prescribed a corticosteroid medication to take orally. It decreases your immune system's response to various diseases to reduce symptoms such as swelling and allergic-type reactions. This medication is usually prescribed to decrease inflammation.

### **What are the Potential Side Effects?**

Most people tolerate this medicine very well and have few if any problems.

Possible side effects include, but are not limited to:

- Heartburn or acid indigestion is common with oral steroid use.
  - \*It is best to take Zantac 150mg or Prilosec twice daily while on the Prednisone.
  - \*It is also best to avoid caffeine, sweets, or salty food while taking the prednisone.
- Mood alteration (feeling very good or very bad)
- Feeling jittery and unable to sleep
- Elevation of blood sugar (if you are a diabetic it can make your glucose level increase significantly, therefore you must carefully monitor this)
- An increase in blood pressure
- Hip disorder (1:40,000 patients) called aseptic necrosis of the hip. (This is almost considered an allergic like reaction to the medication and in severe cases can require the need for a hip replacement surgery)
- Yeast Infections. Steroids may make you more prone to yeast infections. If you are a woman and prone to vaginal yeast infections, use an over-the-counter anti-yeast medication while taking this drug.

You must realize that there are potential risks with any medication, but we would not prescribe this medicine if we didn't feel that the benefits outweigh the risks. If you feel that you need to stop this medication please contact our office before doing so. **REMEMBER TO PROTECT YOUR STOMACH WITH ZANTAC OR SOMETHING SIMILAR WHILE ON THE STEROIDS.**

**ALWAYS** check with your doctor or pharmacist for potential drug interactions with your prescribed medications (for example, coumadin interacts with Tagamet and Zantac, not Pepcid).