

## Renal Services

# Prednisolone: information for kidney transplant patients

### What is Prednisolone used for?

Prednisolone is a steroid that can be used as an immunosuppressant drug. It helps prevent rejection of your transplanted kidney.

### How does Prednisolone work?

Prednisolone stops your body's production of cells that are part of your immune system. This controls your immune system to stop rejection of your new kidney.

### How to take Prednisolone

Prednisolone is available as 1mg tablets and 5mg tablets. You should take it once a day, usually in the morning. It should also be taken with food to help prevent side effects. You will normally start taking 20mg one time a day. This will be gradually reduced to a lower dose in clinic, over 6 weeks.



## Patient Information

### Side effects

- You may have an upset stomach with heartburn and indigestion.
- Your appetite may increase, and you may gain weight.
- You may develop facial flushing or stretch marks may appear on your body.
- You may experience mood swings or temper tantrums.
- Prednisolone can cause an increase in your blood sugar levels.
  - If you have diabetes, you may find your insulin or tablet regime will need to change.
  - Some people may need treatment with tablets (or insulin) to control their blood sugar. This may be needed even if you do not have diabetes. This is rare.
- Your bones may become thinner, and you may develop cataracts if you take Prednisolone for a long time.

### Important: long-term effects

**You are taking immunosuppressant medicines. This means that you may experience long-term health effects. Long-term health effects include an increased risk of infection and cancer.**

**It is important that you follow the transplant team's health advice. Please read the booklet that they give you. It provides important information that you need.**

**You should not be vaccinated with 'live' vaccines while you are taking Prednisolone. The transplant team or pharmacist can advise you on vaccines that are safe for you.**

You should make sure that the prednisolone tablets you are prescribed are white, uncoated tablets. This is because these tablets are absorbed more quickly into your blood stream. Please do not take the red, enteric coated tablets unless your transplant doctor tells you to take them.

## Patient Information

### When taking steroids

- You will be given steroid cards which you should always carry with you.
- You should not stop having steroid treatment without talking to your doctor first.
- You should avoid contact with anyone who has an infectious disease.
- You should avoid close contact with people who have chickenpox or shingles if you have never had chickenpox. **See your doctor urgently if you come into contact with people with chickenpox.**

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 7777 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

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#### Document History

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