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PREDNSIONE

What is this drug?

- Prednisone is an oral corticosteroid.
- It is used to suppress or “quiet down” the immune system. Dr. Donovan prescribes it for hair loss conditions where your immune system is *too active including scarring alopecias and alopecia areata*.

What is the dose I will take and how long will I take it for?

- The dose of Prednisone will vary depending on your hair loss condition.
- In most situations, Prednisone is prescribed for short periods of time (a few weeks to a few months).

What are the side effects of Prednisone?

- The decision to use Prednisone requires careful thought and discussion. Most users of Prednisone short term develop a bit of weight gain, trouble sleeping and concentrating when on the higher doses (typically the first 2 weeks).
- The following side effects must be carefully considered before starting.
 1. OSTEOPOROSIS (loss of calcium from bones). This could make it more likely to develop a fracture in the future
 2. OSTEONECROSIS (loss of blood to bones). This can lead to damage to bones such as those in the hip and may even require hip replacement. This can occur months or even years after Prednisone is stopped.
 3. CATARACTS. Prednisone can increase the chance to develop cataracts in the eye. This may require eye surgery.

Prednisone Side Effects – Continued

4. **DIABETES.** Prednisone may increase blood sugars and lead to diabetes while I take this medicine. Sometimes, this starts out simply as increased thirst and more frequent urination.
5. **FREQUENT URINATION.** Some patients urinate frequently even without developing diabetes.
6. **EMOTIONAL CHANGES.** Prednisone can lead to emotional changes such as feeling high, angry, depressed, trouble thinking or even hallucinations. These effects typically go away once the Prednisone is stopped.
7. **WEIGHT GAIN.** Prednisone makes patients feel hungrier. Weight gain is possible when on prednisone simply due to the craving of food (especially sweets).
8. **ACNE**
9. **INCREASED BLOOD PRESSURE**
10. **ELECTROLYTE CHANGES IN THE BLOOD.** Levels of electrolytes like potassium or sodium can change
11. **INCREASE IN FATS IN THE BLOOD**
12. **INCREASED RISK OF INFECTIONS.**
13. **ROUNDED FACE.** This is sometimes known as a 'moon face'
14. **GLAUCOMA.** Prednisone can increase pressures in the eye
15. **HEADACHES**
16. **INDIGESTION.** Some patients develop heart burn that may require use of antacids
17. **MENSTRUAL CYCLE CHANGES IN WOMEN**
18. **STRETCH MARKS**
19. **INSOMNIA.** Patients may note trouble sleeping
20. **FATIGUE.** Patients may note feeling more tired
21. **MUSCLE CRAMPS**
22. **SWELLING AROUND THE ANKLES.** This is due to increased water retention.
23. **STOMACH PAIN, NAUSEA, VOMITTING**
24. **LIGHT HEADEDNESS**
25. **IRREGULAR HEART BEATS**
26. **HAIR GROWTH ON THE BODY OR FACE**

Will I need any blood tests or monitoring while I am taking Prednisone?

- You will have a baseline set of blood tests, including complete blood count, electrolytes, kidney tests and cholesterol tests.
- Your blood pressure and weight will also be measured
- These will be periodically monitored while you are on Prednisone.