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Prednisone

Prednisone is a powerful "steroid" that reduces the body's inflammatory or immune response to diseases. It can be extremely effective in the treatment of many skin diseases, but it has many potential side effects. It is extremely important that you follow your physician's directions regarding prednisone use. If prednisone is used for more than a week, it should not be stopped abruptly and must be tapered slowly as directed by your physician. Suddenly stopping can result in flu like symptoms and can be potentially dangerous. If you are on long-term steroid treatment and you become ill or are in an accident, be sure to notify your physician or paramedic that you are on chronic steroid therapy.

Potential Side Effects:

- ✓ Mood changes.
- ✓ Increased appetite and water retention which may lead to weight gain.
- ✓ Reduced ability to fight off infections. You may get colds more frequently. Illnesses should not be ignored and symptoms of flu or fevers should be reported to your physician.
- ✓ Worsening of diabetes or high blood pressure.
- ✓ Thinning of the bones leading to fractures. (Usually only associated with long term treatment, but can very rarely occur even with short-term use.)
- ✓ Cataracts and glaucoma are common in everybody, but occur more frequently in people on long-term prednisone therapy.

Monitoring/Prevention of Side Effects:

- ✓ Everyone should take Calcium with Vitamin D 2 tablets per day (OsCal-D or Caltrate-D - 500mg are good choices).
- ✓ Blood pressure may be taken at your doctor visits
- ✓ Blood sugar (glucose) may be checked occasionally
- ✓ Hormone replacement may be recommended for woman on long term prednisone
- ✓ Bone density scans (Dexa-scan) may be ordered for patients on long term prednisone
- ✓ Eye exams should be done by an ophthalmologist or optometrist every 6 to 12 months