



Pharmacy Services

Dexamethasone Injections

General Information

The brand names for dexamethasone are Decadron and Hexadrol. It is used to treat symptoms of many conditions such as joint disease, skin conditions, allergies, swelling, eye disease, and stomach or bowel disease. Dexamethasone also is used to test for adrenal gland problems. This medicine is a corticosteroid.

When You Should NOT Use This Medication

You should not use this medicine if you have had an allergic reaction to dexamethasone or sulfites, or if you have a fungal infection.

How To Use and Store This Medicine

Your doctor will prescribe your exact dose and tell you how often it should be given.

This medicine is given as a shot into a muscle or vein. A nurse or other trained health professional, such as a home health caregiver, will give you this medicine.

Keep all medicine out of the reach of children, and NEVER share your medicine with anyone.

If You Miss a Dose

This medicine should be taken on a fixed schedule. If you miss a dose or forget to use your medicine, call your doctor for instructions.

Drugs and Foods to Avoid

Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal products.

Warnings

Make sure your doctor knows if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or if you have diabetes, cataracts, glaucoma, recent heart attack, tuberculosis, asthma, allergies to other medicines, myasthenia gravis, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, stomach problems, mental illness, strongyloides (threadworm), herpes infection of the eye, liver disease, kidney disease or thyroid problems.

Also make sure your doctor knows if you are using diuretics (water pills), blood thinners (Coumadin), medicine for seizures (Dilantin, phenobarbital), rifampin, indomethacin (Indocin) or ephedrine (Primatene).

You may need to change your diet (such as lowering salt intake) while you are using this medicine. Follow your doctor's instructions carefully.

It may be easier for you to get an infection while you are using this medicine. Avoid crowds or people who are sick. If you are exposed to chickenpox or measles, tell your doctor right away.

Make sure your doctor or dentist who treats you knows that you are using this medicine. Dexamethasone can alter the results of some medical tests.

If this medicine is injected into one of your joints, do not use the joint too much right away, even if it feels better.

Side Effects

Call your doctor right away if you have any of these side effects:

- Allergic reaction: itching or hives, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, tightness in chest, trouble breathing
- Behavior changes
- Black, bloody or tarry stools with severe stomach pain
- Changes in vision, trouble seeing, eye discomfort or discharge
- Diarrhea
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Freckles or changes in skin color
- Loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting
- Unexplained fever or sore throat
- Unusual weakness or tiredness

If this medicine is injected in a joint, call your doctor right away if you have any of these side effects:

- Fever, unusual tiredness or lack of energy
- Increased stiffness or trouble moving joint
- Increased swelling in the joint

If you have problems with these less serious side effects, talk with your doctor:

- Irregular menstrual periods
- Restlessness, anxiety, mood changes, trouble sleeping
- Weight gain or swelling of the feet, ankles, legs or hands

If you have other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, tell your doctor.