

HYDROCORTISONE

Dear @Name@,

Your healthcare team has discussed the following medication with you: hydrocortisone. Brand names may include: Anucort, Colocort, Cortenema, and Cortifoam. Here is some additional information. Let us know if you have any questions regarding this information.

How it works: This medication belongs to a class of drugs called corticosteroids. Corticosteroids (commonly referred to as steroids) are powerful and fast-acting medications that help reduce irritation and swelling (inflammation) in the intestines and throughout the body, including joints, skin, and eyes.

How it is taken: This type of corticosteroid is taken rectally (enema, suppository, or foam) and acts topically in the distal colon to relieve inflammation in that area and typically does not reach higher than the sigmoid colon. You should notice an improvement of symptoms within days of starting this medication. It may have a slower onset of action than oral steroids.

Possible side effects: Side effects can include minor infections like yeast infections (in the mouth or female reproductive organs) or urinary tract infections, serious infections, high blood pressure, high blood sugar levels, weight gain, stretch marks, acne, rounding of the face ("moon face"), facial hair, difficulty sleeping, mood swings, and psychiatric symptoms. These side effects will usually go away when the medication is stopped. Long-term use of steroids can result in a weakening of the bones (osteoporosis), cataracts, damage and irritation of the skin of the anus.

Special considerations: While steroids can be used for weeks or months, they should only be used for short periods of time because of their side effects. Because this medication is given rectally, the likelihood that it will be absorbed into the bloodstream is very low, but possible.

Points to remember: Before taking this medication, let your healthcare team know about other medical conditions that you may have or other medications (even over-the-counter medications or complementary therapies) you may be taking.

Other tips: Rectal preparations are best taken in the evening, just before lying down. Inserting the medication at this time helps the medication to remain in the rectum. If one preparation (enema, suppository or foam) is hard for you to tolerate or retain, consider asking your provider for another preparation. The best way to control your disease is by taking your medication as directed. Even when you do not have any symptoms, it is very important to continue taking your medication to prevent your disease from becoming active again. Do not alter the amount of the medication or how frequently you take it without speaking to your healthcare team first. If you have any side effects or you continue to have symptoms, speak to your healthcare team immediately. If you have an allergy to this medication or other corticosteroids, do not take this medication without speaking to your healthcare team first.

For further information, please check out <http://www.ibdmedicationguide.org/> or follow this link:

</sites/default/files/2020-03/corticosteroids.pdf>