



## Cortico-Steroid Dependency

### Steroid Emergency Card (Adult)



**IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION FOR HEALTHCARE STAFF**

THIS PATIENT IS PHYSICALLY **DEPENDENT** ON DAILY STEROID THERAPY as a critical medicine. It must be given/taken as prescribed and never omitted or discontinued. Missed doses, illness or surgery can cause adrenal crisis requiring emergency treatment.

Patients not on daily steroid therapy or with a history of steroid usage may also require emergency treatment.

Name.....  
Date of Birth ..... NHS Number .....  
Why steroid prescribed .....  
Emergency Contact .....

### It's not just patients with Addison's Disease who need steroid replacement

**Patients on long term steroid therapy (by any route) are at risk of an adrenal crisis if they miss their medication or have intercurrent illness/injury.**

- ⇒ Take/look at drug histories, particularly in patients who have nausea & vomiting, acute abdominal pain, acutely confused/decreased GCS, syncope, unexplained fever, or have been "long-lies".
- ⇒ Look for medic alert bracelets/necklaces and steroid cards.

### Start steroids promptly in patients at risk of an adrenal crisis

#### Emergency Treatment of Adrenal Crisis

- **Hydrocortisone**

- ◇ 100 mg IM or IV
- ◇ Followed by 200mg infusion over 24h in 5% dextrose
- ◇ Or 50mg every 6 hours IM or IV

- **Hydrocortisone IM or IV dosage:**

- ◇ Infants up to 1 year - 25mg
  - ◇ Children 1 to 5 years - 50mg
  - ◇ Patients 6≥ years - 100mg
- Can be repeated 3-4 times in 24 hrs

- **Rehydrate**

- ◇ IV Fluid bolus then Infusion
- ◇ Correct electrolyte abnormalities

#### Moderate intercurrent illness

e.g. fever, infection requiring antibiotics, surgical procedure under local anaesthetic.

#### Double usual daily glucocorticoid use

#### Severe intercurrent illness

e.g. persistent vomiting, acute trauma, sepsis or surgery.

#### Hydrocortisone 100mg IM or IV

Refer to patient's sick day rules.

Safety flash produced by the Royal College of Emergency Medicine's Safer Care Sub-Committee

<https://www.endocrinology.org/adrenal-crisis> PowerPoint Presentation (endocrinology.org)

<https://www.endocrinology.org/media/3946/paediatric-steroid-treatment-card.pdf> HC-emergency-table-May-2023.pdf

**For Safety Alerts and RCEM issued Safety Flashes see:**

<https://rcem.ac.uk/safety-3/>