



Steroid Tablets

What are steroid tablets?

Corticosteroid medicines are often known as steroids. They treat inflammation and swelling affecting the eye and other parts of the body.

Corticosteroids are different from anabolic steroids. Athletes and bodybuilders sometimes use anabolic steroids to build muscle. Corticosteroids are in the body naturally. They help regulate blood sugar, salt and water levels, metabolism and growth. They also help to control allergic reactions.

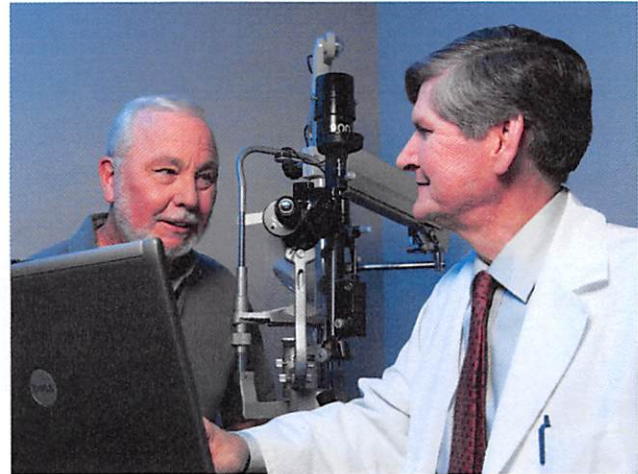
In higher doses, corticosteroids can help treat injuries and diseases affecting the eye. These tablets reduce swelling, pain, and redness. Prednisone is the steroid tablet ophthalmologists use most often for eye disease.

Uveitis is an inflammatory condition affecting the eyes. It usually happens when the body's immune response is not working right. Ophthalmologists prescribe steroid tablets to suppress the immune system to treat uveitis. Steroid tablets can also treat Graves' disease and giant cell arteritis.

What to tell your doctor before taking steroid tablets

Drugs and other medicines interacting with steroids can cause harmful side effects. Tell your ophthalmologist if you are taking any other medicines. These prescription and non-prescription medicines can include:

- antibiotics
- anticoagulants ("blood thinners")



- arthritis medicine
- aspirin or medicine containing aspirin
- diuretics ("water pills")
- estrogen (such as birth-control pills)
- insulin or any oral diabetes medicine
- ulcer medicine

But make sure you include any medicine you are taking.

Tell your ophthalmologist your complete medical history, particularly if you have:

- diabetes
- high blood pressure
- HIV or aids
- liver, kidney, intestinal, or heart disease
- osteoporosis
- stomach ulcers
- tuberculosis
- thyroid gland problems
- seizures

- psychological problems
- a current infection of any kind

Pregnancy

Tell your ophthalmologist if you are pregnant, attempting to become pregnant or breastfeeding. Steroids can have an effect on your baby's growth and development.

How should you take steroid tablets?

Follow your ophthalmologist's instructions about how and when to take steroid tablets. Notify your primary care doctor you will be taking steroids. The following are several important tips to follow:

- take your tablets with a meal to avoid stomach irritation
- carefully watch your diet as well as your salt intake
- exercise regularly to maintain muscle strength
- limit alcohol consumption
- avoid vaccination or immunization, unless your doctor tells you it is ok

Do not stop taking the tablets suddenly. This may result in severe side effects. When you stop taking steroids, you should slowly reduce your dosage. You may still notice minor effects, including:

- fever
- diarrhea
- lightheadedness
- tiredness
- lack of appetite
- joint aches

You can develop serious eye disorders if you take steroid tablets for conditions not related to the eye. These disorders include glaucoma and cataracts. Tell your doctor if you have problems while using steroids, including:

- vision problems
- eye pain
- redness, and
- tearing

Summary

Corticosteroid medicines are often known as steroids. They treat swelling affecting the eye. They reduce swelling, pain, and redness.

Your ophthalmologist uses corticosteroid tablets to treat conditions like uveitis, Graves' disease, and giant cell arteritis.

Drug interactions with steroids can cause harmful side effects. Tell your ophthalmologist if you are taking any other medicines. Tell your primary care doctor you will be taking steroids.

Tell your ophthalmologist your complete medical history. Tell him or her if you are pregnant, attempting to become pregnant or breastfeeding.

Follow your ophthalmologist's instructions about how and when to take steroid tablets. Do not stop the tablets suddenly. This may result in severe side effects. You can develop serious eye disorders if you take steroid tablets for conditions not related to the eye. Tell your doctor if you have problems while using steroids.

If you have any questions about your vision, speak with your ophthalmologist. He or she is committed to protecting your sight.

Get more information about steroid tablets from EyeSmart—provided by the American Academy of Ophthalmology—at aao.org/steroid-tablets-link.

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