



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

(To Staff and Families: Please use Helping Hand V-157 Medicine Safety for safety information.)

Prednisone and Prednisolone (Prelone®, Pediapred®, Deltasone®, Orapred®)

Prednisone (**pred**-nuh-sown) and prednisolone (**pred**-ni-suh-lown) are medicines known as corticosteroids (kor-tuh-ko-**steh**-roydz). These medicines are usually called steroids. The brand name for prednisone is Deltasone®. Prednisolone is the generic name for Orapred®, Pediapred®, and Prelone®.

Prednisone and prednisolone are like hormones that the body makes. The body may not make enough of its own hormones while your child takes prednisone or prednisolone. In some cases, the dose of prednisone and prednisolone may be decreased. As the dose of prednisone or prednisolone is decreased, the body will slowly begin to make more of its own hormones again. These medicines are used to help reduce inflammation caused by illness or injury. Depending on what your child is being treated for, their symptoms should go away or get better in a few days or weeks.

How to Give These Medicines

- If your child takes this medicine only once a day or once every other day, give it in the morning with breakfast.
- Use a pediatric measuring device or an oral syringe to measure the exact dose of liquid medicine (Picture 1). Ask for one at the pharmacy if you are not given one. Do not measure liquid medicines with kitchen spoons.
- Give the **exact dose** of medicine ordered.
- Give this medicine with food or after meals.
- It is very important to finish all the medicine that is ordered for your child. Do not stop the medicine early, even if your child is feeling better.



Picture 1 Use an oral syringe to give your child the medicine.

If You Forget to Give a Dose

If you forget to give a dose of this medicine, give it as soon as possible. If it's within 4 hours of the next dose, do not give the missed dose at all. Do not double the next dose. Instead, go back to your regular dosing schedule. If you have any questions about this, check with your child's doctor or pharmacist.

If a Dose Is Vomited

Even if the medicine is thrown up (vomited) right after giving it, some of the medicine may still be in the stomach. Do not repeat the dose unless it's in tablet or capsule form and you can see that the whole thing was vomited.

Medicine Storage

- **Store all medicine out of the reach of children and pets.**
- Always keep medicine in the original bottle from the pharmacy.
- Light and moisture make this medicine not work as well. Keep the bottle tightly closed, and store in a dark, dry place. Do not keep it in the bathroom or above the kitchen sink.

Drug Interactions

- Do not give over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, like Tylenol®, aspirin, antacids, or cold medicines, without checking with your child's doctor or pharmacist first.
- If your child is taking any other medicine or herbal supplements, tell the doctor, health care provider, and pharmacist. Some medicines should not be taken with prednisone or prednisolone. If they are, your child should be watched closely. These include:
 - Aspirin
 - Antacids
 - Warfarin
 - Echinacea
 - Isoniazid
 - Cyclosporine (in transplant patients)
 - Furosemide (Lasix)
 - Certain antibiotics
 - Hydrochlorothiazide
 - Some vaccines (if taking prednisone or prednisolone long-term)
 - Medicines for diabetes (prednisolone and prednisone can increase blood sugar)
- Your child should not drink large amounts of soft drinks, chocolate drinks, tea, or coffee while taking this medicine.
- If you have other questions about prednisone, prednisolone, and other medicines your child takes, talk to the child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

Warnings

- If your child is allergic to prednisone or prednisolone, they **should not** take this medicine.
- **Never let your child stop taking prednisone or prednisolone or change the dose without first talking to their doctor.**
- Let your child's doctor know if they have any of the following:
 - Tuberculosis (TB)
 - High blood pressure
 - Kidney problems
 - Thyroid problems
 - Seizures
 - Diabetes

Possible Short-Term Side Effects

- Nausea, vomiting
- Increased blood pressure
- Acne
- Puffiness of the face
- Increased appetite and weight gain
- Mood changes
- Difficulty sleeping (if the dose is given at night)
- Increased blood sugar, like in children with diabetes

Possible Side Effects With Long-Term Use

- Most side effects should go away after the medicine is stopped. For side effects with long-term use, talk to your child's doctor or health care provider. They can usually prevent or reverse these problems by changing the dose or giving other medicines to prevent these effects. If you have any questions about side effects, ask your child's doctor, health care provider, or pharmacist. Some possible side effects may include:
 - Increased risk of infection
 - Slow growth
 - Bones that break easily (brittle bones)
 - Stomach ulcers and inflammation
 - High blood sugar (glucose)

When to Call for Emergency Help

Call 911 for emergency help if your child has any of these signs of an allergic reaction:

- Trouble breathing
- Swelling of the tongue, hands, feet, or ankles

When to Call the Doctor

Call your child's doctor or health care provider if any of the following occurs:

- Skin rash (**STOP giving the medicine right away and call.**)
- Stomach pain that is severe or happens often.
- Signs of infection: fever over 100° Fahrenheit (F) or 37.8 Celsius (C) under their arm (axillary), very bad sore throat, ear pain, cough, or wounds that will not heal
- Your child is exposed to chickenpox or shingles
- Dizziness or weakness
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Change in vision
- Severe injury or illness
- Vomiting
- Peeing (urinating) more than usual. This is a sign of high blood sugar.
- Your child is having side effects that continue or are very bothersome
- Your child's condition has not improved

Other Important Information

- Tell your child's doctor and pharmacist if they have a strange or allergic reaction to any medicine.
- Tell all other doctors or dentists treating your child if prednisone or prednisolone has been taken recently or for a long period of time. The effects of this medicine can stay in the body for several months after you stop taking it.
- Check with your child's doctor before giving them any other medicines or vaccines (immunizations) while they're taking prednisone or prednisolone.
- If blood tests are done while prednisone is in the child's system, the medicine may change the results of some tests.