



Athena Eye Institute
5282 Medical Dr, Suite 610
San Antonio, Tx 78229
Phone: (210) 780-7595
Fax: (210) 519-3172

Steroid Drugs: Information for Patients and Informed Consent to Use Steroids

Steroids can reduce inflammation in the body and in the eye, this is known as immunosuppression. To manage eye inflammation, steroids can be prescribed for systemic (whole body) use or local (administered as drops in the eye or as injections into and around the eye) use.

Systemic steroid (such as prednisone or solumedrol) use is associated with elevated blood pressure, difficulty in controlling blood sugars, psychologic changes (including anxiety, psychosis, and depression), change (usually increase) in eye pressure, and weight gain. Steroids can also cause heart attacks, endocrine system dysregulation, strokes (cerebrovascular accidents), gastrointestinal bleeding (ulcers), serious infection, and damage to bones (such as avascular necrosis of the femur). Long term use of steroids is associated with decreased bone density and endocrine dysfunction, so most steroid use is limited to three months or less, when possible. Patients may also develop acne, bruising, rounding of the face, increased fat between the shoulders, and pink/purple stretch marks on the skin of abdomen, thighs, breasts, and arms. Given the potential for side effects with long term use of steroids, patients requiring prolonged immunosuppression may be switched to another class of medication. Supplementation with calcium and vitamin D may be necessary if steroids are taken long term to limit bone damage, and bone density testing may be beneficial. Patients are encouraged to call for emergency help, present to an emergency room, or see a medical physician for these issues, should they occur, especially chest pain, headache, or signs of stroke (loss of consciousness or inability to move one or more body parts). If you develop high blood pressure or high blood sugar, your regular medical doctor can help you adjust your medications to control your blood pressure and blood sugar.

Local steroids are commonly prescribed in the management of ocular inflammation and include steroid eye drops (such as prednisolone or difluprednate) or steroid injections in or around the eye (e.g. triamcinolone acetonide, Ozurdex (dexamethasone), fluocinolone (Iluvien, Yutiq)). These are associated with increased risk of high eye pressure (glaucoma, which may require medical eyedrops or surgery), cataract, and eye infection. Rarely, treatment with local steroids (especially injections) can lead to retinal detachment, intraocular bleeding, and other issues, which need to be seen as an emergency. If you believe an emergency exists, please call to schedule an appointment with Athena Eye Institute or, if you are unable to travel to our office, with the closest eye care provider to you for urgent evaluation.

By signing this form, I indicate I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the potential risks of steroid use and will seek immediate care if I suspect I am experiencing an emergency or adverse event due to steroids.

Patient or Legal Representative Signature: _____

Date of Signature: _____