

# Prednisone or Medrol Taper (Corticosteroid Pills)

**Dr. Skedros uses two types of tapers to control bad pain and swelling:**

## **1. 6 Day taper using ‘Medrol dose pack’ (methylprednisolone) (4 mg per tablet);**

**“PO” = by mouth**

**Day 1:** 8 mg PO before breakfast, 4 mg after lunch, 4 mg after dinner, and 8 mg at bedtime

**Day 2:** 4 mg PO before breakfast, 4 mg after lunch, 4 mg after dinner, and 8 mg at bedtime

**Day 3:** 4 mg PO before breakfast, 4 mg after lunch, 4 mg after dinner, and 4 mg at bedtime

**Day 4:** 4 mg PO before breakfast, 4 mg after lunch, and 4 mg at bedtime

**Day 5:** 4 mg PO before breakfast, and 4 mg at bedtime

**Day 6:** 4 mg PO before breakfast

## **2. 19 Day taper using generic prednisone (5 mg per tablet); “PO” = by mouth**

**Days 1-4:** 20 mg PO before breakfast (only 20 mg per day)

**Days 5-8:** 15 mg PO before breakfast, (only 15 mg per day)

**Days 9-12:** 10 mg PO before breakfast (only 10 mg per day)

**Days 13-17:** 5 mg PO before breakfast (only 5 mg per day; on day 13 it is okay to re-start Advil, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naproxen, or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication)

**Days 18-19:** 2.5 mg per day (only ½ tablet per day)

### **What are prednisone and methylprednisolone (Medrol dose pack)?**

These are strong anti-inflammatory medications and are corticosteroids. They prevent the release of substances in the body that cause inflammation. Therefore they are very good for relieving pain, swelling, and stiffness, and can settle down nerve pain. You should **not** suddenly stop using these medications — follow the instructions about tapering your dose.

### **Why take a prednisone or methylprednisolone taper?”?**

They are stronger than Ibuprofen or Aleve. They will help lessen pain and improve motion more rapidly than just taking Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, or other standard non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (or “NSAIDs”).

### **What is a “taper”?**

This is a gradual reduction in the dose. Prednisone and methylprednisolone are similar to cortisol, a hormone naturally made by your adrenal glands. If you take these medications for more than a few weeks, your adrenal glands decrease cortisol production. A gradual reduction in the dosage of these medications gives your adrenal glands time to resume their normal function.

### **What are the risks?**

***If you do not tolerate prednisone or the Medrol dose pack, then stop as able and call our office to inform us that this occurred (801-747-1020).***

- You can have temporary water gain or, less commonly, mild edema (usually swelling of feet).
- You can have a flushed face or a general feeling of warmth and wellness.
- If you have diabetes your blood sugar levels can go up while on prednisone.
- If you have an infection it can get worse.
- Most other complications are rare because you will only take prednisone pills for a short period of time.