

COVID-19 advice: adrenal insufficiency

Addison’s Disease and adrenal insufficiency due to Pituitary Disease

During COVID-19 we encourage you to:

- have the flu vaccination
- discuss Pneumovax with your GP
- have a letter in your wallet to give the emergency department in the event of an Addisonian crisis (ask your endocrinologist or GP)
- always carry a Solu-cortef Act-O-Vial, 2ml syringe, drawing up needle, 25G long needle on you
- have a sick day management plan (often contained within the letter for ED)
- have a medic alert/steroid card. We encourage you to wear the medic alert/carrying the card in your wallet, always.
- have one script or 30 days of medication on supply (please do not stockpile)
- have ambulance cover.

Sick day management plan

You should discuss your sick day management plan with your treating doctor.

If you don’t have a sick day management letter, we suggest the following sick management protocol:

<p>Moderate illness Fevers, require antibiotics</p>	<p>Increase your corticosteroids (hydrocortisone, prednisolone, cortisone acetate/cortate, dexamethasone) by the 3x3 rule. I.e. triple your corticosteroid dose for 3 days (or until symptoms resolve) and see GP within this time period.</p>
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<p>Severe illness</p> <p>High fevers greater than 38.5, unable to eat, severe symptoms or vomiting or severe diarrhoea</p>	<p>If you have SoluCortef at home, self-inject it or ask a relative to inject it. Then attend the emergency department (ED) for review</p> <p>If you don't have SoluCortef at home, attend the ED ASAP, consider whether you need to call an ambulance. Once in ED be assertive in your need for immediate IV hydrocortisone.</p>
<p>Trauma, motor vehicle accident or general anaesthetic</p>	<p>Routine or urgent procedure you should receive hydrocortisone 100mg IV on presentation to ED.</p>
<p>Addison's or Adrenal patients</p>	<p>Continue your fludrocortisone during acute illness, you do not need to increase the dose.</p>

Supply of medication

You should keep one month supply of medication at home. Please don't stockpile it. If you are having trouble accessing enough medication or your medication is out of stock, please contact your Endocrinologist or the Endocrinology Team at Canberra Hospital on endocrinology@act.gov.au or by calling 5124 2228

How to give IM hydrocortisone 100mg (SoluCortef Act-O-Vial)

Ideally you and your carer/families should attend an education session with the Endocrine Nurse at Canberra Hospital. If you haven't been able to attend a session, or who would like to attend the session again, we recommend the following video:

watch bcove.video/2NhG7q0 (last digit is a zero, not capital O)

or

text 0448 267 833 the word "SoluCortef" (beware auto-correct changing the spelling) and the link will be text back to your phone.

You should attend ED (or GP or other medical review) after administration of SoluCortef.

You can also contact Michelle Warnock on 5124 2605 for appointments.

COVID-19 and adrenal insufficiency

From an adrenal insufficiency point of view, you can treat infection with COVID-19 like other infection.

If you are found to be COVID-19 positive, then the following applies:

- Asymptomatic/minimal symptoms: no change to steroid medications
- Moderate disease with temperatures and respiratory symptoms: sick day management according to your individual plan or suggested plan. Continue increased steroids until symptoms have resolved.
- Severe illness, vomiting or diarrhea: give SoluCortef and present to ED for assessment.

How to protect yourself from COVID-19

To reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19, please follow the government recommendations regarding social distancing. These include:

- Stay at home unless essential to leave (supermarket, chemist, doctor's appointments)
- Wash your hands frequently
- Don't touch your face
- When you go out don't touch other people, keep 1.5m from other people, do not touch anything unless necessary, wash hands when you return home.

Contact us

For routine enquires or questions call 5124 3794 during business hours or email endocrinology@act.gov.au

For urgent questions contact Endocrinology Registrar or Endocrinologist on-call via the Canberra Hospital switchboard on 5124 0000.