

**Methylprednisolone** <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a601157.html>

## About your treatment

Your doctor has ordered methylprednisolone, a corticosteroid, to relieve inflammation (swelling, heat, redness, and pain). The drug will be added to an intravenous fluid that will drip through a needle or catheter placed in your vein for at least 1 hour per day.

Methylprednisolone is similar to a natural hormone produced by your adrenal glands. It is used to treat, but not cure, certain forms of arthritis; skin, blood, kidney, eye, thyroid, and intestinal disorders (e.g., colitis); and multiple sclerosis. This medication is sometimes prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

Your health care provider (doctor, nurse, or pharmacist) may measure the effectiveness and side effects of your treatment using laboratory tests and physical examinations. It is important to keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. The length of treatment depends on how you respond to the medication.

**THE HIGHLIGHTED** information below about Why **Prednisone is prescribed is not included in information about Methylprednisolone, but since they are both** corticosteroids **used** to treat many of the same named conditions in patients and have many of the same **bad Side effects and** warnings, the question is: Should **Methylprednisolone** be prescribed to a patient who has: **high blood pressure; osteoporosis; new vision problems since 17 October 2009; thinned skin; easy bruising; depression; and** ulcers just to name a few? Should **Methylprednisolone** be prescribed to a patient who is also receiving **DILTIAZEM HCL (CARDIZEM CD)** when there is a warning given not to prescribe **Prednisone** to a patient who is also receiving **DILTIAZEM HCL (CARDIZEM CD)**?

Prednisone is used alone or with other medications to treat the symptoms of low corticosteroid levels (lack of certain substances that are usually produced by the body and are needed for normal body functioning). Prednisone is also used to treat other conditions in patients with normal corticosteroid levels. These conditions include certain types of arthritis; severe allergic reactions; multiple sclerosis (a disease in which the nerves do not function properly); lupus (a disease in which the body attacks many of its own organs); and certain conditions that affect the lungs, skin, eyes, kidneys blood, thyroid, stomach, and intestines. Prednisone is also sometimes used to treat the symptoms of certain types of cancer. Prednisone is in a class of medications called corticosteroids. It works to treat patients with low levels of corticosteroids by replacing **steroids** that are normally produced naturally by the body. It works to treat other conditions by **reducing swelling and redness and by changing the way the immune system works.**

## What special precautions should I follow?

Before administering methylprednisolone,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to methylprednisolone, aspirin, or any other drugs.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking, especially anticoagulants ('blood thinners') such as warfarin (Coumadin), arthritis medications, aspirin, azithromycin (Zithromax), clarithromycin (Biaxin), cyclosporine (Neoral, Sandimmune), digoxin (Lanoxin), diuretics ('water pills'), erythromycin, estrogen (Premarin), ketoconazole (Nizoral), oral contraceptives, phenobarbital, phenytoin (Dilantin), rifampin (Rifadin), theophylline (Theo-Dur), and vitamins.
- tell your doctor if you have a fungal infection (other than on your skin); do not take methylprednisolone without talking to your doctor.
- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had liver, kidney, intestinal, or heart disease; diabetes; an underactive thyroid gland; **high blood pressure**; mental illness; myasthenia gravis; **osteoporosis**; herpes eye infection; seizures; tuberculosis (TB); or **ulcers**.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking methylprednisolone, call your doctor.

- if you are having surgery, including dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that you are taking methylprednisolone.

## Administering your medication

Before you administer methylprednisolone, look at the solution closely. It should be clear and free of floating material. Gently squeeze the bag or observe the solution container to make sure there are no leaks. Do not use the solution if it is discolored, if it contains particles, or if the bag or container leaks. Use a new solution, but show the damaged one to your health care provider.

It is important that you use your medication exactly as directed. Do not change your dosing schedule without talking to your health care provider. Your health care provider may tell you to stop your infusion if you have a mechanical problem (such as a blockage in the tubing, needle, or catheter); if you have to stop an infusion, call your health care provider immediately so your therapy can continue.

## Side effects

**Methylprednisolone** may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- headache
- dizziness
- insomnia
- restlessness
- depression
- anxiety
- unusual moods
- increased sweating
- increased hair growth
- reddened face
- acne
- thinned skin
- easy bruising
- tiny purple skin spots
- irregular or absent menstrual periods

If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor immediately:

- swollen feet, ankles, and lower legs
- muscle pain and weakness
- eye pain
- vision problems
- puffy skin (especially the face)
- a cold or infection that lasts a long time

## Storing your medication [Return to top](#)

- Your health care provider probably will give you a several-day supply of methylprednisolone at a time. You will be told how to prepare each dose.

Store your medication only as directed. Make sure you understand what you need to store your medication properly.

Keep your supplies in a clean, dry place when you are not using them, and keep all medications and supplies out of reach of children. Your health care provider will tell you how to throw away used needles, syringes, tubing, and containers to avoid accidental injury.

### **In case of emergency/overdose** [Return to top](#)

In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call local emergency services at 911.

### **Signs of infection** [Return to top](#)

If you are receiving methylprednisolone in your vein or under your skin, you need to know the symptoms of a catheter-related infection (an infection where the needle enters your vein or skin). If you experience any of these effects near your intravenous catheter, tell your health care provider as soon as possible:

- tenderness
- warmth
- irritation
- drainage
- redness
- swelling
- pain

### **Brand names** [Return to top](#)

- A-methaPred®
- Depo-Medrol®
- Solu-Medrol®