Plumb's Drug Handouts

Prednisolone/Prednisone

(*pred-**niss**-oh-lone; **pred**-ni-zone*)

Key Information

- Prednisone and prednisolone are steroid anti-inflammatory medications.
- Give with food to help prevent stomach upset
- Provide your animal with plenty of fresh water. This medication can increase thirst.
- Many side effects are possible, especially when used long term. The most common side effects are increased appetite, thirst, and need to urinate.
- This medication can cause stomach or intestinal ulcers and bleeding. Contact your veterinarian immediately if your animal stops eating, has black, tarry stools, or has bloody vomit.
- Do not suddenly stop giving this medication. It needs to be decreased gradually over time, especially if given for longer than 2 weeks.

Note: The purpose of this information sheet is to answer commonly asked questions. It does not contain all available information for this medication and is not a substitute for medical advice provided by your veterinary healthcare team.

Description	• Corticosteroid • Prednisone and prednisolone are slightly different versions of the same steroid. • Available as tablets and oral solutions
Other common names	• Other names for prednisone: *Deltasone* • Other names for prednisolone: *Millipred*, *Orapred*, *Pediapred*, *PrednisTab*
Uses	FDA-approved uses in animals: • Treatment of inflammatory conditions in dogs At the discretion of your veterinarian, this medication may be used in different species or for other reasons (extra-label use), such as: • Treatment of inflammation in dogs, cats, and other species • Treatment of low cortisol (*Addison's disease*) in dogs and cats • Immune system suppression in dogs and cats • Treatment of some cancers in dogs and cats
Before this medication is given	No medication is 100% safe in all patients. Discuss with your veterinarian: • Any other medications or supplements your animal is taking. This medication can interact with many other drugs. • Any conditions or diseases your animal currently has or has had in the past • Any side effects your animal has had to medications in the past • The risks of using this medication if your animal is pregnant or nursing Talk to your veterinarian if your animal will be getting allergy tested.
Warnings for animals	Do **not** use: • PredniSONE in cats. PredniSOLOne should be used in cats because it works better than predniSONE in this species. • In animals that are allergic to it or other corticosteroids • In animals that have fungal or viral infections • In animals with stomach, intestinal, or eye ulcers • In animals that are receiving nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) or other steroids. Combination of these medications may lead to stomach ulcers and gastrointestinal bleeding. • In animals that have high cortisol levels (*Cushing's disease*)

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	Use with **caution** in animals: • With diabetes • With heart, kidney, liver, or bone disease • That have a high risk for blood clots • With tuberculosis or other bacterial infections • That are pregnant or nursing • That are undergoing or recovering from surgery, or will be having surgery • That are young and growing. This medication can affect growth if used for a long time. Certain medications are not allowed in some animal competitions. Check rules and regulations when your animal is taking a medication.
Warnings for humans	• Wash your hands after handling any medication.
How do I give this medication?	• Give with food to help prevent stomach upset • Make sure to provide your animal with plenty of fresh water. This medication can increase thirst. • If giving this medication once daily to dogs, give it in the morning. This may decrease the chance that your dog will need to urinate overnight. • If using a liquid, measure with an oral syringe, medicine cup, or dosing spoon. Do not use household measuring devices. • Your veterinarian may prescribe a tapering schedule where the dose is decreased gradually over time. Follow the prescribed schedule carefully. *Give exactly as your veterinarian has prescribed. Always follow the instructions on the prescription label.*
Side effects	**Common** – contact your veterinarian if any of these signs are severe, continue to occur, or worsen over time: • Vomiting or diarrhea • Mild behavioral changes • Increased hunger and thirst, especially in dogs • Increased frequency of urination, especially in dogs • Panting, especially in dogs **Possible with long-term use** – contact your veterinarian if you notice any of these signs: • Weight gain or pot-bellied appearance • Skin or coat changes, including hair loss • Muscle wasting • Weakness **Severe** – stop the medication and contact your veterinarian immediately if you notice any of these signs: • Black, tarry stools or bloody vomit. These may be signs of stomach or intestinal ulcers or bleeding. • Weight loss along with excessive hunger, thirst, or urination. These could indicate high blood sugar or diabetes. • Significant behavioral changes, such as aggression or threatening actions Prednisone and prednisolone can weaken the immune system when used at high dosages, which increases the risk for infection. These medications can also mask some usual signs of infection, so decreased energy may be the only sign of infection you can see. Contact your veterinarian immediately if your animal suddenly develops low energy levels. If your animal has been on high doses of prednisone or prednisolone, vaccinations may not be effective. Talk to your veterinarian about keeping your animal protected while your animal is receiving this medication.

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How will I know it's working?	• Your animal should start feeling better within 1 to 2 days. You should see a gradual improvement in your animal's signs after that time. • Your veterinarian may need to run follow-up tests to see how well this medication is working. *Contact your veterinary clinic if your animal's signs worsen or do not improve.*
How long will the medication effects last?	• This medication will stop working within 24 hours of the last dose. • It may last longer if your animal has reduced liver function.
How long do I give it for?	This medication can be given for different lengths of time. Give it for as long as your veterinarian tells you. You may need to refill the prescription. Do not suddenly stop giving this medication, especially if used for longer than 2 weeks. • When discontinuing, the dose needs to be decreased gradually over time to prevent adverse effects. • Your veterinarian will provide tapering instructions.
Overdose	If you witness or suspect an overdose, call your veterinarian or an animal-specific poison control center (consultation fee applies): • **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center**: (888) 426-4435 • **Pet Poison Helpline**: (855) 764-7661 *Have the product or label with you if possible.*
Missed dose	In most cases, if you miss a dose: • Give it when you remember, then return to the regular dosing schedule. If it is close to the time for the next dose: • Skip the missed dose. • Give the next dose at the next scheduled time. • Continue the regular dosing schedule. *If you are unsure, call your veterinary clinic. Do not double-up or give extra doses.*
Storage	• Store in the original container at room temperature. • Keep out of reach of children and animals.
Disposal	Do not flush this medication down the toilet or wash down the sink. Options for disposing of unused or expired medications include: • Drug take-back sites: This is preferred whenever possible. To find a site near you, contact your local law enforcement or waste management authorities. • Home disposal: Mix the medication in with coffee grounds or kitty litter, seal the mixture in a plastic bag, and throw it away in the trash. *Do **not** save leftover medication or give it to others to use.*
Questions?	Talk to your veterinarian.

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