

## ENDOCRINOLOGY & DIABETES UNIT

Endocrine Clinic

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DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## ILLNESS MANAGEMENT DURING ADRENAL SUPPRESSION

Your child has been having treatment for his/her condition, which includes taking a steroid such as hydrocortisone, prednisone, prednisolone, budesonide, ACTH, or dexamethasone. A side-effect of steroid medication is that the child's body becomes temporarily unable to make its own steroid, cortisol. Cortisol is an important hormone made in the adrenal glands. It helps the body respond to the stress of illnesses or accidents. Cortisol keeps the blood sugar and blood pressure in a healthy normal range. For the period of time that your child's body is unable to make its own cortisol, you will be required to replace it as follows:

When your child's \_\_\_\_\_ dose is less than \_\_\_\_\_ mg per day, you will follow illness management instructions: **As soon as the illness (fever more than 101°F or 38.5°C, infection, moderate trauma) is recognized, increase the steroid dose to:**

If the illness dose is given for more than a week, discuss a plan with the doctor for tapering the dose back to normal dosing.

**Emergency Injection:** Give your emergency injection for the following situations:

- illness with vomiting and/or diarrhea
- severe injury such as fracture
- loss of consciousness
- general anesthetic
- seizure

In the above situations, the digestive system is unable to absorb the pill, and the stress to the body is greater than usual. The steroid must be given by injection into the muscle:

Hydrocortisone for injection (100 mg / 2 mL) \_\_\_\_\_ mg, which is \_\_\_\_\_ mL (or cc) in volume

This injection will act quickly but will not last long—approximately 6 hours. After 6 hours, the child needs more hydrocortisone. If the child is still unable to take pills, the injection must be repeated.

Additional instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

**If your child is ill and requires injectable hydrocortisone, s/he will likely need further medical attention. Take your child to the local hospital without delay for further assessment and treatment.**

**If needed, contact the Endocrinology & Diabetes Unit at BC's Children's Hospital. During evenings and on weekends, call the 24-hour paging service at 604-875-2161 and ask for the Pediatric Endocrinologist-on-call.**

**FOR LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS OR ANY OTHER SEVERE MEDICAL CRISIS,  
GIVE INJECTION IMMEDIATELY AND CALL 911 FOR ASSISTANCE.**