

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center

Medication Information Sheet for Hydrocortisone enema (Cortenema)

Brand Names: Cortenemas

Generic Names: Corticosteroids

Drug Class: Gastrointestinal anti-inflammatory

What does this medication do?

It is used to treat active distal (left-sided) ulcerative colitis, proctosigmoiditis and proctitis. Since it is a topical medication (works on the surface of the bowel), it has fewer side effects, as the bowel does not absorb it well.

Possible Side Effects:

This medication is well tolerated by most people. If you have problems with side effects, please talk with your doctor. These side effects can occur with long-term use.

- Rectal burning
- Glucose intolerance (diabetes like condition)
- Osteoporosis
- Hypertension
- Masking of infections or intestinal perforation
- Peptic ulcer disease
- Edema (swelling of the feet or ankles)
- Cushingoid appearance (moonface and buffalo hump)
- Acne
- Striae (stretch marks)
- Hirsutism (hair growth)
- Mood disturbance
- Sleep disturbance
- Weight gain

Call your doctor *immediately* if you have any of these side effects:

- Worsening bloody diarrhea
- Fever, sore throat or other signs of infection
- Mood swings (feeling elated or feeling depressed)
- Abdominal pain (worsening)

Warning:

- Avoid during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Stop immediately if you develop a fistula or perianal abscess and call your doctor

Dosage and Administration:

- Attempt to evacuate before administering the Cortenema
- Shake the medication well and administer the full bottle while lying on your left side
- Cortenema is smaller than a Fleet enema (which is used *to induce* a bowel movement)
- This medication is administered at bedtime and retained throughout the night or for as long as you can hold it