

Oral Steroids

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Oral steroids, a non-narcotic type of prescription medication, are very powerful anti-inflammatory medications that are sometimes an effective treatment for **low back pain**. Like narcotics agents, oral steroids are intended for use for short periods of time (one to two weeks). Oral steroids come in many forms, but are usually ordered as a Medrol Dose Pack in which patients starts with a high dose for initial low back pain relief and then taper down to a lower dose over five or six days.



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When used on a short-term basis, there are generally few complications associated with oral steroids. There are, however, a number of potential complications associated with long-term usage of oral steroids. Adverse side effects can include weight gain, stomach ulcers, **osteoporosis**, collapse of the hip joint, as well as other complications.

It is important to note that diabetics should not use oral steroids since the medication increases blood sugar. Steroids should also not be taken by patients with an active infection (e.g. sinus infection, urinary tract infection) because they can make the infection worse.

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