



**Medical
Blueprints**

STEROIDS FOR THE COMMON COLD: WHAT'S THE RISK? REPORT #2837

BACKGROUND: Corticosteroids are steroids you get in an injection. They're different than anabolic steroids, which are used to build muscle. Corticosteroids are the man-made version of cortisol, a hormone that's naturally made by the adrenal glands. These hormones help respond to stress in the body from injury or illness and reduce immune system activity which helps ease inflammation. Steroid injections help increase the natural hormones' anti-inflammatory and immune-suppressing power. They are used for immune-related diseases and also joint and muscle conditions. Steroid injections must be done in a doctor's office or hospital. The doctor may use an ultrasound to locate exactly where to give you the injection. Steroids can also be given through the veins (intravenously). This method is usually used for autoimmune flares.

(Source: <https://www.healthline.com/health/steroid-injection#what-are-steroids>)

RISKS OF STEROIDS: The use of steroids can lead to emotional and physical problems. Studies show that the abuse of steroids can increase aggressive behavior, cause mood swings, and impair judgment. Other effects may include male-pattern baldness, acne, and liver damage. Risks that can increase with the use of steroids are heart disease, growth of certain cancers, and may worsen other medical problems. Steroids taken orally have been linked to liver disease, and steroids taken by injection can increase the risk of hepatitis or AIDS. Steroids can prevent a person from reaching their natural height and trigger the growth of breasts in males. In females, steroids can cause a deeper voice and facial hair growth caused by the masculinizing effect of testosterone-like hormones.

(Source: <https://www.hormone.org/your-health-and-hormones/steroid-and-hormone-abuse/health-effects-of-steroids>)

ALTERNATIVE TO STEROIDS: Research shows monoclonal antibodies could significantly improve quality of life for individuals with severe asthma while reducing the need for oral corticosteroids and their side effects. The study highlighted several people out of 200,000 with severe asthma, who didn't respond to the usual inhaled treatments, and had to take oral steroid tablets. However, injectable biologic treatments called monoclonal antibodies are now being developed and have shown to reduce asthma attacks and hospital visits and are suitable for some people with severe asthma. "Many people with mild to moderate asthma will need to take low doses of anti-inflammatory steroids through their preventer inhaler to manage their symptoms and cut their risk of an asthma attack, but monoclonal antibodies are biologic treatments that can be an alternative to long-term steroids, preventing more asthma attacks but with fewer side effects," explained Andy Whittamore, a GP and clinical lead at Asthma UK.

(Source: <https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/news/alternative-to-steroids-could-transform-the-lives-of-people-with-severe-asthma-charity-says/20205524.article?firstPass=false#:~:text=Monoclonal%20antibodies%20are%20biologic%20treatments,but%20with%20fewer%20side%20effects.%E2%80%9D>)

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