

HERTFORDSHIRE MEDICINES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PREDNISOLONE ENTERIC COATED (E/C) TABLETS – **NOT RECOMMENDED**

Date Decision last revised: November 2010	Decision Status: Final
<p>HMMC RECOMMENDATION – the committee recommends use in line with the West Hertfordshire Joint Prescribing Group (WHJPG) decision (see Appendix below). This is now a Hertfordshire wide recommendation.</p> <p>NOT RECOMMENDED - prednisolone E/C tablets are NOT recommended for prescribing in primary and secondary care.</p> <p>Prednisolone PLAIN (NON E/C) tablets are RECOMMENDED for prescribing in primary and secondary care when oral prednisolone is indicated.</p>	

APPENDIX

West Hertfordshire Joint Prescribing Group
February 2010
PREDNISOLONE PLAIN (NON E/C) TABLETS - APPROVED

Background

Prednisolone enteric coated (E/C) tablets are significantly more expensive than the plain tablets with little evidence to show that the E/C preparation is less likely to cause peptic ulceration or less likely to cause dyspepsia.

West Hertfordshire Hospitals Trust (WHHT) Drugs & Therapeutics Committee (DTC) has approved the use of plain prednisolone tablets only and for all patients currently taking E/C prednisolone tablets to be switched to the plain tablets.

WHJPG Recommendation

Following a review of the evaluated published evidence, West Hertfordshire Joint Prescribing Group **APPROVES** the use of PLAIN prednisolone tablets and does NOT recommend the use of E/C prednisolone tablets for all patients in both primary and secondary care settings.

Consider gastro protection with a generic lower cost proton pump inhibitor (PPI) i.e. lansoprazole and omeprazole if patient experiences oesophageal reflux, dyspepsia, or ulcer like symptoms whilst taking plain prednisolone tablets.

Evidence base for use of E/C prednisolone tablets over plain tablets

Data on the subject of the use of E/C prednisolone tablets over plain tablets are sparse and the last overview, which was published in the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin (DTB) 1987, concluded that uncertainty remains as to whether enteric coating decreases the tendency of steroids to cause ulcers¹. This was also the conclusion of the previous DTB on this subject in 1977, i.e. "there is no evidence that EC prednisolone is less likely than the plain tablets to cause peptic ulceration (PU) and the evidence that it is less likely to cause dyspepsia is not satisfactory².

Since the DTB, a few more papers on this subject have been published³ but these are limited to pharmacokinetic studies and case reports. Most of the published pharmacokinetic studies have noted lower- and slower time to- peak plasma concentration with E/C compared with uncoated prednisolone tablets, though bioavailability was generally found to be similar. A small number of case reports have indicated problems with disease control with use of E/C or with switch to E/C from the uncoated formulation. From the limited available data it would seem that E/C tablets may be associated with less predictable absorption; and in certain clinical conditions where plasma levels of prednisolone need to be stable and predictable some authors recommend the use of the uncoated tablets particularly in the absence of robust evidence to suggest that enteric coating confers GI protection.

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Cost Impact⁴

Prednisolone Tablet Preparation	Pack Size	Cost
1mg PLAIN	28	£1.01
2.5mg E/C	28	£5.95
5mg PLAIN	28	£1.10
5mg E/C	28	£6.04

If all prednisolone 5mg E/C tablets prescribed in West Hertfordshire were switched to plain prednisolone 5mg, then the annual cost savings would be **£268,811** (based on Sep 08 – Aug 09 ePACT data)

This information is based on evidence at the time of publishing and will be reviewed in 2 years or sooner in the light of new available evidence.

Approved: February 2010

Review Date: February 2012

References:

1. Anon. Do corticosteroids cause peptic ulcers? Drug & Therapeutics Bulletin 1987; 25: 41-3
2. Anon. What use is enteric-coated prednisolone? Drug & Therapeutics Bulletin, October 1977; 15 (21): 83-4
3. UKMI Questions and Answers (310.01) 29th Jan 2010. Is there any evidence to support the use of enteric coated over uncoated prednisolone tablets?
4. Drug Tariff February 2010