

Patient Information Sheet

Non-systemic corticosteroids (Budesonide) for Inflammatory Bowel Disease (brand name = Entocort®)

What is Budesonide?

Budesonide is a steroid medication, similar to Prednisone, but with fewer side effects. Steroids occur naturally in the body and are needed in low amounts for healthy functioning. When taken as medication, a steroid can reduce the inflammation in the lining of the intestine.

When is Budesonide used?

Budesonide is used when other medications have not been effective in reducing the signs and symptoms of bowel inflammation. Because of the adverse effects of Prednisone, patients with active inflammatory bowel disease may also use Budesonide because it is almost as active as Prednisone, but there is a lower risk of side effects.

How is Budesonide given?

The budesonide capsule is coated so that it dissolves in the small intestine, and because of this can be used to target inflammation of the last portion of the small intestine (terminal ileum) and the right side of the large bowel. It can also be put into an enema for active inflammatory bowel disease in the left side of the large bowel. Steroids are used for short periods of time in patients with bowel inflammation, and the dose is gradually tapered off over 3-4 months.

What are the side effects of Budesonide?

Budesonide likely has the same adverse effects as Prednisone*, but because 90% is broken down in the liver, the risk of these side effects are much less than with Prednisone.

*Side effects of Prednisone

Steroids have many side effects. Some of these are: mood changes, facial puffiness, hair growth, increased pressure in the eyes (glaucoma), haziness of the lens of the eyes (cataracts), high blood pressure, high blood sugar (diabetes), abdominal pain due to ulcers in the stomach or duodenum, an increased risk of infections, danger of low blood pressure if the medication is abruptly stopped, osteoporosis, and bone pain due to reduced blood supply in the bones (avascular necrosis). You should be aware of and be informed of these adverse effects before starting or re-starting on Prednisone.