

## Administration of Prednisolone to children in RACH

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### Introduction

Prednisolone is a corticosteroid that is indicated for many treatments in children e.g. inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease, nephrotic syndrome and for some children at the Alex, in the treatment of asthma/wheeze instead of, or in addition to, dexamethasone.

Formulations available to administer prednisolone to a child include:

1. Soluble 5mg tablets
2. Oral solution 5mg/5ml
3. Standard 5mg tablets – can be swallowed whole or unlicensed option of administering crushed and mixed with soft food or dissolved in small volume of water.

The soluble tablets should be used first line when prednisolone is prescribed. The oral solution is not preferred as volumes can be difficult to administer. If children can swallow tablets the standard 5mg tablets can be used as these are considerably cheaper to the trust. The crushing or dispersing of standard tablets is unlicensed so should only be used where soluble tablets are unavailable and the oral solution not tolerated.

### Method

Administration:

Ideally it is best to have prednisolone in the morning, with or just after food or a feed, and should be given roughly around the same time each day.

For administration of soluble tablets:

- A) Disperse the required number of tablets in water or flavoured fluid (squash), using a small volume to ensure full amount is given.

For administration of standard tablets:

- A) Crush the tablet(s) and mix with a small amount of soft food such as yogurt, honey or jam<sup>(3)</sup>. Using a small volume to ensure the full amount is given. The mixture must be given immediately.
- B) Dissolve the required quantity of standard prednisolone tablets in 2-5ml of water or flavoured fluid. (e.g. neat squash). Using a small volume to ensure the full amount is given.

Dissolving tablets is best done in the barrel of an Enfit syringe:

- Remove the plunger
- Place the tablets inside the barrel of the syringe and replace the plunger.
- Draw up the fluid and fit a stopper to the end of the syringe before shaking the syringe to dissolve the tablets.
- The mixture must be given immediately.

## References:

- 1) <http://access.newtguidelines.com/P/Prednisolone.html>
- 2) NPPG discussion pages <https://www.networks.nhs.uk/nhs-networks/nppg-neonatal-and-paediatric-pharmacists-group/messageboard/general-discussion>
- 3) <http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/prednisolone-asthma>
- 4) BSUH Wheeze/Asthma care pathway >1 years, 2019,  
<https://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/library/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2020/07/Paediatric-guidelines-Asthma-Pathway-Oct-2019-booklet.pdf>