

Contact details

Diabetes Centre
Ground Floor, Nuffield House
Queen Elizabeth Hospital,
Mindelsohn Way,
Edgbaston,
Birmingham B15 2TH

Monday to Friday

8.30am to 1.00pm &
2.00pm to 4.00pm
Tel: 0121 371 4523
0121 371 4535

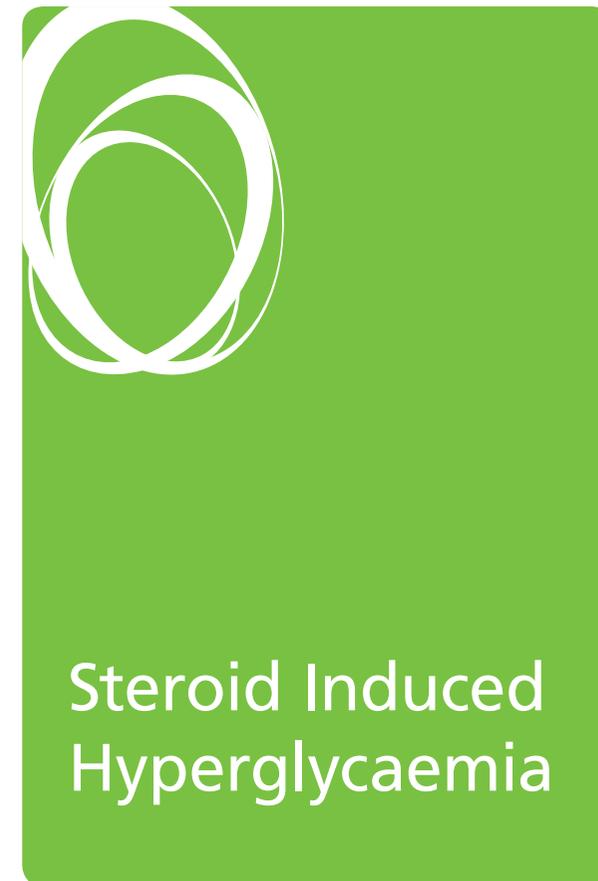
* We thank Mrs. Michelle McMahon,
Diabetes Specialist Nurse, University
Hospitals Birmingham NHS Trust for
developing this patient information leaflet.

Diabetes
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston
Birmingham, B15 2GW
Telephone: 0121 371 2000

PI17/1890/01 Author: Michelle McMahon
Date: May 2019 Review date: May 2021



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What are steroids?

Steroids are widely used in hospital to help reduce inflammation and suppress the immune system. The most commonly used steroids are prednisolone, methylprednisolone, dexamethasone and hydrocortisone.

They can be used to treat a large number of conditions, such as:

- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Asthma
- Inflammation of the bowel
- Some autoimmune conditions
- After transplantation to prevent rejection

What is Steroid induced hyperglycaemia?

The use of steroid medication can lead to a rise in blood glucose (sugar) levels, particularly if treated with high doses over a prolonged period of time. This is referred to as steroid induced hyperglycaemia and may or may not disappear once the steroids have been stopped.

How will I know if I developed it?

This is done by a nurse obtaining a small sample of blood from your finger to check for any rise in the blood glucose levels, and may be performed up to 4 times a day.

Who is at risk of developing steroid induced hyperglycaemia?

- People with a family history of diabetes.
- People who are overweight or obese
- People with polycystic ovarian syndrome.
- South Asian, African-Caribbean or Middle Eastern origin who are over the age of 25.
- People who previously had high blood glucose levels whilst on steroid treatment.
- Women who previously developed diabetes whilst pregnant.
- People with pre-existing type1 or type 2 diabetes may also experience a rise in blood glucose levels.

What symptoms could I get?

- Sometimes, you might develop symptoms from high glucose levels. Such as:
- Increasing thirst or drinking more fluid than normal.
- Passing more urine than normal, especially at night.
- Blurring of vision.
- Increased tiredness and lethargy.
- Unexpected weight loss.

If you have high blood glucose levels, you may be asked to home blood glucose monitor. This will be explained to you by your healthcare professional.

If you develop any of these symptoms please seek advice from your GP or the hospital doctor supervising your treatment.