

Hydrocortisone

Type

Adrenocorticosteroid [S4]

Presentations

100mg powder in 2ml vial (reconstitute with 2ml normal saline)

Actions

Numerous and widespread. ACTAS administration for:

- 1 Anti-inflammatory effects on the airways
- 2 Stimulates the normal increase in cortisol secretion in response to stress

Uses

- 1 Moderate to severe respiratory distress due to asthma or exacerbation of COPD
- 2 Patients with a diagnosed adrenal insufficiency who experience a stress response and exhibit altered conscious state and/or refractory hypotension

Adverse Effects

Nil significant with single use

Contraindications

Known previous reaction to corticosteroids

Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

Pregnancy

- Safe to use

Breastfeeding

- Approved for administration in ACTAS setting, document breastfeeding status in ePCR, advise against breastfeeding for 4 hours post administration

Hydrocortisone

Doses

Asthma and COPD

Adult

- **ICP:** 100mg IV – slowly over 2 minutes

Paediatric

- **ICP:** 4mg/kg IV (to a maximum of 100mg) – slowly over 2 minutes

Adrenal crisis

Adult

- **ICP:** 100mg IV – slowly over 2 minutes
 - » May be administered IM.

Paediatric

- **ICP:** IV (slowly over 2 minutes):
 - » <3 years = 25mg IV
 - » 3-12 years = 50mg IV
 - » >12 years = 100mg IV.
- **ICP:** May be administered IM.

Special Notes

- Hydrocortisone is not a first-line priority drug in the management of severe respiratory distress. It is only to be given after aggressive oxygenation, inhaled bronchodilators, and (where necessary) adrenaline.

More Information

Version history

Update: Added pregnancy and breastfeeding advice.

09/09/24, Version 1.0.3