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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

If you are unhappy with the advice you have been given by your GP, consultant, or another healthcare professional, you may ask for a second (or further) opinion.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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What Should I Do With My Steroid Tablets When I am Ill? (hydrocortisone)

The body produces steroids all the time and these are essential to keep you well.

You are taking hydrocortisone as your body is not able to produce enough steroids of its own. **You should never stop your steroid tablets.**

When ill, the body needs more steroids than normal. This is very important in helping us to get better. If you are ill you may need to increase your hydrocortisone (steroid) treatment, and we recommend the following:-

1. If you have a mild illness (such as a cold) you do not need to change your tablets.
2. If you are more unwell (such as if you have a chest infection, tonsillitis or flu), then you should double the dose of hydrocortisone you normally take while you are ill, and return to your usual dose when you are better.

You are currently on mg am, mg lunch time, mg pm

You should increase to:

 mg am, mg lunch time, mg pm

3. If you are seriously ill, and particularly if you have vomiting or diarrhoea, the tablets may not work. In this situation you should seek urgent medical help as you will need an injection of hydrocortisone. You should contact your GP (or out-of hours doctor) for an urgent visit, or go to the Accident and Emergency department at the hospital for treatment. You may require hospital admission. **Seek help early - do not wait, thinking that things will improve on their own at home.**

If in any doubt then ask for help.

Always make sure that you have enough tablets and do not run out.

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