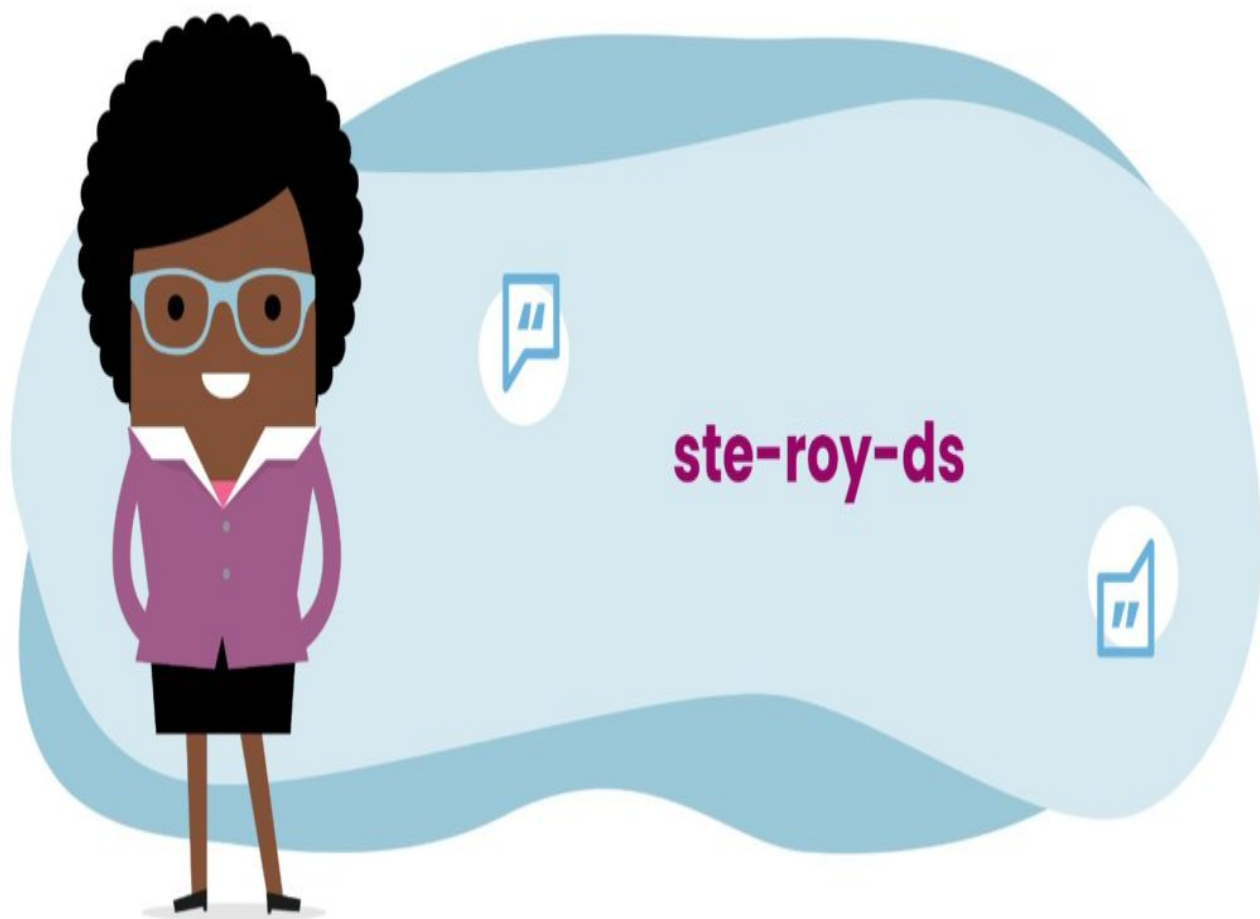


Steroids

Steroids are known as corticosteroids or glucocorticoids. Steroids are used to help control many forms of arthritis.

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Drug names

Tablets: Prednisolone

Eye drops: Dexamethasone, prednisolone

Infusion (by a drip): Methylprednisolone or hydrocortisone

Injection into a joint: Triamcinolone hexacetonide, Triamcinolone acetonide, Betamethasone, Methylprednisolone, hydrocortisone

Type of JIA: ALL

How is it taken? Injection into a joint; tablet; eye-drops

How often? Varies

How long for? Often a one-off treatment. Not generally used long term.

How soon does it start working? Within 24 hours

Usage

Steroids are used sparingly in JIA; the smallest dose for the shortest time. They can be very useful at the start of treatment and can be very effective in treating a 'flare-up' of JIA while waiting for new DMARDs to become effective.

Steroids are given as tablets (crushed or liquid for little ones) at home, eye drops for uveitis and as an injection in hospital.

Effects

The effects of steroids are felt very quickly – within 24 hours. Steroids can make you feel better in yourself and can provide a sense of wellbeing. The reason for this is not known but it can lead to enthusiastic over-activity.

Precautions

Your child's vaccination history should be reviewed before starting steroids.

If your child has been in contact with someone with chickenpox or another infectious disease, or who have become ill with an infection, it is important to speak to your doctor as soon as possible for advice.

When steroids are used long term, they may have marked side effects, including weight gain (particularly noticeable as a rounding of the face). They can make a person vulnerable to infectious diseases. They may also affect a child's physical development. That's why doctors are particularly cautious about their use in children or young people.

If a steroid treatment has been taken for three weeks or more it needs to be reduced gradually on the advice of the doctor in charge of the treatment and should not be stopped abruptly.

A steroid card should be issued at the start of treatment and carried by the parent or young person at all times

Further Reading

[Steroid injections](#)

Introduction Intra-articular steroid injections (IAS) are frequently used as first line treatment in Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA). As such, IAS may be considered as medication to induce remission in inflamed joints, and for some patients IAS may be the only medical treatment that is required, usually those with a small number of inflamed joints (oligoarthritis). [...]

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