

# OneMedicine

A PRIVATE CLINIC

## Hay Fever (Triamcinolone acetone)

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This document contains important information. Please read it carefully.

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Exceptional Care

## What is Hay Fever?

Hay fever (seasonal allergic rhinitis) is caused by an allergic reaction to pollen. It can trigger sneezing, a blocked or runny nose and itchy eyes. It is normal for it to appear at the same time each year.

Severe hay fever symptoms can ruin peoples' summers and have a detrimental effect on quality of life. It may also prevent people from being able to work optimally.

The UK is particularly affected by pollen with a mixture of flowers and trees such as silver birch and rape seed most likely to worsen symptoms of hay fever.

It is estimated that there is 3 billion trees in the UK! Working out at nearly 50 trees per person.

## Hay Fever Symptoms

- Sneezing
- Blocked or runny nose
- Itchy eyes, nose, throat and roof of your mouth
- Red eyes, which water
- Postnasal drip (mucus dripping down your throat from the back of your nose) – this may make you cough
- Headaches, caused by a stuffy nose

## Why Would Someone Have a Steroid Injection?

There are now a whole host of over-the-counter hay fever treatments available, which can be used to good effect. However, around 10% of sufferers do not respond to conventional treatment, so may consider an injection to help them get through the season.

- The injection is for the treatment of severe hay fever, and should be considered as a second stage of treatment for patients who have already tried and had little relief from other forms of medication.
- The injection does not cure hay fever, it temporarily suppresses the immune system enough to take away the symptoms in most people who need it.
- The patient is injected in the buttock muscle and it takes just a few seconds.
- One injection can be enough to last for a whole hay fever season.

## What is Kenalog?

Each Kenalog injection dose contains Triamcinolone acetonide 40mg as the active ingredient. Triamcinolone acetonide belongs to a group of medicines called corticosteroids (steroids). The principal desired effect of corticosteroids is to reduce the body's inflammatory and allergic response to Pollen.

## Where is it Administered?

Upper outer quadrant of buttock. (Dorsogluteal site) This is the most popular site for deep intramuscular injections, as it is a fairly large muscle it can withstand large and repeated injections. However, the gluteus muscle does have the lowest drug absorption rate. It is vital that this area is correctly identified as the sciatic nerve and the superior gluteal artery lie in the medial part of the buttock. These structures can be damaged especially in elderly, emaciated or a non-ambulant patient as the muscle mass is likely to have atrophied. In mildly obese patients, injection into this area is likely to be into the adipose tissue rather than the muscle, therefore resulting in slow absorption of the medication.

### Potential Benefits:

A Steroid injection helps many people with their symptoms of severe hay-fever. For many people it completely relieves the symptoms for the entire season and for others it reduces the severity of the symptoms to a point where adding other treatments can allow life as normal.

Occasionally a second dose of Steroid may be needed. The doctor will discuss this with you. It is not recommended that anyone have more than 80mg (2 injections) per season except in exceptional circumstances.

## Possible Side Effects

Possible Side-effects: Steroids are powerful medications designed to reduce the body's inflammatory and allergic responses. An injection of Triamcinolone (kenalog) 40mg is approximately equivalent to the affects you would get from taking a 5mg tablet of Prednisolone every day for about 3 weeks. Triamcinolone injections, like all steroids can cause unwanted side-effects, although these are rare at the dose levels that you get from a Triamcinolone injection. The unique issue with a Triamcinolone IM injection that differentiates it from oral steroids is that once the injection is administered the effects last for at least 3 weeks. With tablets the effects are gone within about 24 hours or less. This is the main reason NHS guidelines have identified this method of administering steroids as a problem. There are occasions when the body needs its immune system at top strength and there are concerns that having it partially suppressed like this for up to 3 weeks could cause significant problems, that the person having the injection should be alert to.

## Serious Possible Adverse Effects

Anaphylactic allergic reactions have been very rarely reported. You must contact a doctor IMMEDIATELY (by going to an Accident & Emergency department) if you notice any of the following symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction:

- Swelling of the face, lips or throat
- Breathing difficulties
- Skin itching, redness or a rash
- Sticky black stools
- Severe abdominal pain
- Vomiting blood

## Possible Psychological Effects of all Steroids

All steroids, including Kenalog, can occasionally cause mental health problems although this is usually associated with much higher doses of steroid than what is given in a Kenalog injection. If you experience any of the symptoms listed below, please contact your doctor straight away.

- Feeling depressed, including thinking about suicide
- Feeling high (mania), or moods that go up and down
- Feeling anxious, or having problems sleeping, difficulty in thinking or being confused and losing your
- Feeling, seeing or hearing things which do not exist.

## **Other Possible Side Effects Specific to Steroid Injection:**

- Increased risk of infections.
- It is theoretically possible that if you were to get an infection such as measles or chicken pox within 3 weeks of having a kenalog injection it would be a worse episode than would otherwise be the case.
- Pain and skin colour changes at site of injection
- Sterile abscess at site of injection. This can cause an unsightly dimple and scar on the skin of your buttock.
- Dimpling of skin caused by loss of fat under the skin at injection site

## **Other Possible Side Effects General to Steroids**

- Mood changes
- Indigestion, stomach pain, stomach ulcers, bloating, weight gain, pancreatitis.
- Eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts
- Fungal infections e.g thrush
- Osteoporosis (thinner bones).
- Reduction in the body's overall ability to respond to major stress resulting from serious injuries.

## **Important**

It is really important you understand the information contained in this document. We also encourage you to seek further information online or elsewhere to make sure you are comfortable the risks and benefits of this treatment. Should you have any doubts or concerns you should, in the first instance, discuss these with the Doctor that you are Consulting.