

Oral Steroid Taper - Adverse Symptoms/Events

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<http://www.ulcerativecolitis.org.uk/information sheets>

Steroid taper/reduction of steroids should always be done under the supervision of a doctor/consultant. The following symptoms/events should be looked out for – and especially checked at each reduction. If in any doubt then see your GP/Consultant. Use the steroid taper tracking sheet to record any symptoms.

Number	Symptom	Details	Actions
1	Blood	Do you have blood in your stools?	If blood is present delay the reduction. If there are large quantities or it doesn't clear up in 7-10 days then see your GP.
2	Mucous	Do you have mucous in your stools?	Delay the reduction for a few days. In many cases this will settle down. Otherwise consult your GP.
3	Bowel Movements	Are you having more than three bowel movements a day? Are your bowel movements liquid?	Check your diet – the diet section of the web site has advice. Also check you are not de-hydrated and are drinking plenty of water. If you have no blood or mucous discuss the use of codeine phosphate with your GP. Delay steroid reduction till bowel movements are less frequent.
4	Pain	Have you any pain – particularly towards the lower left side of your abdomen?	Occasional pain is to be expected. If the pain is frequent or continuous then delay steroid reduction for a few days. If this persists then consult your GP.
5	Infection	Have you had a recent infection such as a cold/sore throat?	Always consult your GP if you have an infection while on steroids. Delay steroid reduction till 7 days after the infection has cleared unless advised otherwise by your GP.
6	Injury	Have you had a recent injury?	If receiving treatment for the injury ensure medical staff are aware you are taking steroid medication. Don't reduce steroids until any inflammation has settled down.
7	Hydration	Do you feel thirsty? Is your urine yellow?	If your urine is yellow or you feel thirsty then you are most likely de-hydrated. If you are drinking less than 3 litres of water per day then increase the amount. If you are consuming sufficient water then consult your GP who may wish to test for diabetes or other underlying causes.
8	Food remains	Are there identifiable remains of food in your stools?	You have food in your diet that your body is unable to digest. Try and remove it from your diet. Mashed potatoes, fish, chicken, Porridge, Ready Brek and apple juice are all easily digested – and can be used as a good and balanced recovery diet. Also see the dietary advice sheet.