

Steroid Therapy

The word “steroid” is commonly associated with the taking of anabolic steroids which is not relevant to your oral health. Steroid therapy however can be used in the treatment of numerous conditions and these medications can often alert your dentist to underlying conditions which they do need to be aware of. Inhaled corticosteroids are often prescribed to individuals with asthma or respiratory conditions and can sometimes result in oral fungal infections if careful attention is not paid to oral hygiene after each dose. Regular doses of corticosteroid or glucocorticosteroid tablets may indicate an adrenal insufficiency, a condition whereby the patient’s adrenal glands do not function adequately. Patients suffering from adrenal insufficiency may undergo *adrenal crisis* when experiencing physiological stress and may require an increased dose of their medication the day before or the day of their treatment.



Common Medications the Dentist needs to know you are taking:

BISPHOSPHONATES	BLOOD THINNERS	STEROID THERAPY	OVER THE COUNTER
Actonel	Apixaban	Seretide	Aspirin
Aclasta	Aspirin	Symbicort	Calcium
Alendronate	Astrix		Iron
Altevia	Cartia	Cortone Acetate	Magnesium
APD	Clavix	Decadron	St John’s Wart
Aredia	Clopidogrel	Dexasone	All Fish Oils
Binosto	Coumadin	Solurex	Garlic tabs
Bonifos	Equilis	Zema Pak	
Boniva	Heparin		
Didronel	Marevan		
Fosamax	Plavix		
Loron	Pradaxa		
Nerixia	Xarelto		
Reclast	Warfarin		
Skelid			
Zometa			



Creating Smiles with Care

Why is it important to fill in a medical history form for the Dentist?



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Anticoagulants/Anti-platelet drugs

These medications are more commonly known as “Blood Thinners” and are prescribed to patients with high blood pressure or clotting disorders e.g. stroke, thrombosis. People taking these drugs will bleed more easily. This may result in excessive bleeding during some dental procedures. Mostly your dentist will not advise you to stop taking this medication, but in consultation with your GP (Dr) may advise you to stop taking them for 3 days before & 2 days after a dental procedure where there is a likelihood of excessive bleeding. In the case of Warfarin, cessation of this drug will never be advised. Your INR level will need to be checked close to the scheduled procedure with a blood test.

Over The Counter (OTC) medications

Often if a drug is not prescribed by a GP it is neglected on medical history forms. Many medications do not require a prescription for purchase and although these drugs are not considered harmful enough to require monitoring, they may affect the way your body absorbs other essential medications which may be prescribed. For this reason it is essential to also include any vitamin supplements or herbal remedies being taken on a regular basis so your dental practitioner is

Some of the more important drugs include:

- Bisphosphonates
- Anticoagulants/ Antiplatelet drugs (blood thinners)
- Steroid Therapies
- Natural/Herbal medications and Vitamin/Mineral supplements

Bisphosphonates

Bisphosphonates are a class of drug used in the treatment of bone and calcium disorders such as osteoporosis. These drugs may be administered orally or intravenously and can cause a complication within the mouth called *Bisphosphonate-Related Osteonecrosis of the Jaws* (BRONJ). BRONJ describes an area of exposed bone in the jaws persisting for more than 8 weeks in a patient undergoing Bisphosphonate therapy and it most commonly follows tooth extraction although it may also be associated with poorly fitting dentures.

It is usually painful and may lead to infection of the surrounding soft tissues. Prior to undergoing long-term treatment with bisphosphonates patients should be referred to a dentist for evaluation to ensure the individual is dentally fit.

Once undergoing bisphosphonate therapy, patients should have their oral health regularly checked and if for any reason extraction of teeth is unavoidable it should be carefully managed and closely monitored until the wound has healed.

Why is it important to complete a medical history at the dentist, regularly?

An in depth, accurate and up to date medical history is required for all patients seeking medical treatment of any description. A medical history form can provide practitioners with essential information regarding an individual’s current health, present allergies and possible future complications with treatment. Your dentist will need to know details regarding any and all current medical conditions, allergies, and medications (both prescription and over the counter) a patient has and should be advised if any of these change.

You must tick (Yes or No) for each of the conditions listed on the form. You must note any and all allergies, other conditions not mentioned and ALL medications.

Medications

Of particular importance to the medical history is a list of any medications a patient is currently taking. These may include drugs prescribed by a doctor or specialist as well as those purchased over the counter. Many medications when combined can interact and reduce the efficacy of other medications which may be prescribed by your dentist. They may also indicate an underlying condition not previously noted.