






Cortisol (Adrenal) Insufficiency Action Plan

IWK Health

Date: _____ Completed by: _____

Cortisol is an important hormone used by the body for energy. It keeps the body's systems running smoothly. Extra cortisol is needed when the body is sick or injured. If the child's body does not have enough cortisol, their blood pressure and blood sugar may become low. This is called an adrenal crisis. Without treatment, an adrenal crisis can lead to unconsciousness, coma and even death.

CHILD'S CONDITION	ACTION
<p>Green Zone: </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very well • Daily dosing 	<p>Take: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Always wear identification to say you have adrenal insufficiency (e.g. Medic Alert)</p>
<p>Yellow Zone: </p> <p>Moderate Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever greater than 38C or 101F • Vomiting once • Infections: e.g. bad head cold, strep throat, chest or ear infection • Broken bone/severe muscle sprain • Very intense exercise. 	<p>Hydrocortisone/Cortef® Stress Dosing</p> <p>Take _____ right away and then Take _____ every 8 hours (3 times a day) for 3 days. Try to spread the medicine evenly over the day (i.e. 7am, 3pm, 10pm).</p> <p>Low blood sugar and salt loss can occur with illness or minor injuries. In addition to the stress dose, increase your child's intake of sugar containing fluids and salts (e.g. juice, non-diet Gatorade®). Ensure your child eats some carbohydrate containing foods (e.g. salty crackers, toast with peanut butter). Avoid Pedialyte® alone since it has very little sugar.</p> <p>Resume usual dose after 3 days if well. If not, call Endocrine team.</p>
<p>Red Zone: </p> <p>Severe Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks unwell/very pale • Unconscious • Weakness / dizziness • Extreme tiredness • Vomits more than once in 6 to 8 hours • Severe diarrhea • Cold, clammy skin • Fast heart beat /breathing • Surgery/ Anesthesia 	<p>IMMEDIATELY GIVE INJECTION (NEEDLE)</p> <p>Hydrocortisone/Solu-Cortef® _____ mg</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Inject into the child's thigh or arm as you were taught 2) Go the nearest Emergency Department, or call 911 3) Show Emergency staff this sheet 4) Page Endocrinology team at number below* <p>You will not harm your child by giving the Solu-Cortef® injection.</p>

If you have **non-urgent** questions call the Endocrine Nurses (902) 470-8127. *In an **emergency** call the IWK at (902) 470-8888 or Toll Free 1-888-470-5888 and ask for the Endocrinologist on call.

If your child needs surgery or sedation for a procedure, notify the endocrine office AND ask the treating doctor to consult Endocrinology, as higher doses of hydrocortisone are needed.