Arroyo Grande Community Hospital
A Dignity Health Member

If you have any questions, **please consult your physician or call AGCH Coastal Cancer Care at 805.481.7245. For emergency, call 911.**

PATIENT EDUCATION

Dexamethasone (Decadron)

SIDE EFFECTS

It is important for the patient to follow all prescription instructions carefully. You may experience some, all, or none of the following:

- **Stomach Irritation –** You may notice a gnawing, burning, indigestion, or heartburn-like pain in your stomach. If you have any ulcer, this can cause it to be worse. Take this medication with food to help avoid this problem.
- **High Blood Sugar –** This usually occurs with long-terms use. You need to report an increase in thirst, frequency of urination, increased fatigue, or drowsiness, as these may be signs of increased blood sugar or diabetes. If you are diabetic, you may require dose adjustments with Insulin or oral medications.
- **Trouble Sleeping/Restlessness/Mood Swings –** This is temporary and will go away after you stop taking this medicine. If possible, take this drug in the morning to help prevent sleeping difficulties.
- **Weight Gain/Fluid Retention –** This medicine may cause you to retain some extra fluid. You may notice your ankles, feet, and hands swelling as well as some facial fullness.
- **Increased Appetite**
- **Mood Changes**

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Notify your doctor or oncology nurse immediately if you experience:

- Dizziness, blurred vision, frequent urination, excessive thirst – these are signs of diabetes.
- Swelling of ankles, feet and hands
- Blood in stools or black tarry stools.
- Depression or severe mood swings.
- **If you are diabetic, you must tell your nurse or doctor BEFORE starting this drug.**
- **If you have a stomach ulcer, be sure and tell your doctor BEFORE starting this drug.**

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- It is very important to take this medication EXACTLY as instructed. Do not change dosage or times without consulting your doctor.