

MEDICATION NAME:

CORTICOSTEROIDS-DEXAMETHASONE  
**BRAND: DECADRON, DEXAMETHASONE INTENSOL, DEXASONE, SOLUREX,  
BAYCADRON, AND ZEMA PAK.**

HOW IS IT GIVEN:

Intravenous (IV) injection, oral tablet or liquid.  
Administer after meals or with food or milk to decrease GI upset.

HOW DOES IT WORK:

Reduces destruction of antibody-coated platelets in the blood and the bone marrow, thereby increasing effective platelet production. May have immunosuppressant effect (reducing antibody production) after multiple cycles. May reduce bleeding through a direct effect on the blood vessels.

COMMON DOSING REGIMENS:

40 mg/day (i.e. 28 mg/m<sup>2</sup>) for 4 days x 1-4 course given at 3-4 week intervals.

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS:

Mood swings, irritability, anger, anxiety, insomnia (difficulty sleeping), weight gain, Cushingoid faces (puffy and rounder facial features with acne), stomach irritation, ulcers, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and fluid retention.

RARE BUT SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS:

With repetitive cycles: osteoporosis (weakening of bones), skin changes including thinning and “senile purpura”, hair loss, avascular necrosis (death of bone) in joints eg Hips, psychosis, cataracts, infections, adrenal insufficiency. Rapid decline in platelet count may occur between cycles.

TYPICAL TIME TO RESPONSE:

Initial response 3-14 days, Peak response 4-28 days .

LIKELIHOOD OF INITIAL RESPONSE:

Approximately 80%

LIKELIHOOD OF LONG-TERM RESPONSE  
(3-5 YEARS):

The prevalence of sustained response off treatment has not been established but may be increased with  $\geq 3$  courses.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Mood alterations have been reported. Use with caution if a preexisting mental health condition is present.

#### References:

1. Matzdorff, A., Meyer, O., Ostermann, H., Krefeld, V., Eberi, W., Kuhn, T., Pabinger I., and Rommel, M. (2018). Immune Thrombocytopenia – Current Diagnostics and Therapy: Recommendations of a Joint Working Group of DGHO, OGHO, SGH, GPOH, and DGTI. *Oncology Research Treatment*. 41(suppl 5):1-30.
2. Platelet Disorder Support Association <https://www.pdsa.org/treatments/conventional/corticosteroids.html>
3. Chemoexperts <https://www.chemoexperts.com/dexamethasone-decadron-itp.html>