

Fludrocortisone (Florinef) Usage Guide for Dysautonomia

General Information

- Tablet strength: 100mcg (0.1mg), scored for easy halving.
- Store in refrigerator (2–8°C or 36–46°F).
- Mechanism: Increases sodium retention in kidneys, leading to water retention and potassium excretion by mimicking the hormone aldosterone.
- A pure mineralocorticoid analogue, so whilst many people are cautious about glucocorticoid steroid effects as it ends in “cortisone” these are not a factor unless at very, very, high doses.

Dosage Protocol

Start low and increase gradually every 5–7 days until improvement or side effects occur:

- 50mcg (1/2 tablet) daily for one week, then
- 100mcg (1 tablet) daily for one week, then
- 150mcg (1 1/2 tablets) daily for one week, then
- 200mcg (2 tablets) daily for one week, then
- 250mcg (2 1/2 tablets) daily for one week, then
- 300mcg (3 tablets) daily.

Stop increasing when you feel sufficient improvement, or after reaching 300mcg with no effect.

Note: Higher doses can be used but will need medical supervision for monitoring of blood potassium levels.

Side Effects

Common: Fluid retention, bloating, headache, stomach ache.

If side effects occur:

- Skip 1–2 doses until recovered.
- Return to the last effective dose without side effects.

Important Notes

- Potassium levels: Generally, not a concern below 300mcg daily, unless on an unusual diet.
- If no improvement at 300mcg, discontinue and explore other options.
- Doses above 300mcg: Consult a doctor and monitor serum potassium levels closely.
- Take with food or milk to reduce stomach upset.

Monitoring

- Regular blood pressure checks.
- Periodic blood tests to check electrolyte levels, especially potassium.
- Weight monitoring (sudden weight gain may indicate fluid retention).

Dietary Considerations

- Maintain a consistent salt intake in your diet.
- Increase potassium-rich foods if recommended by your doctor.

For Medical Practitioners

- Consider potassium supplementation for doses exceeding 300mcg.
- Some patients may benefit from higher doses with careful monitoring.
- Regularly assess effectiveness and side effects.
- Be aware of potential drug interactions, especially with other medications affecting electrolyte balance.

Precautions

- Inform all healthcare providers about this medication
- Discuss use during pregnancy or breastfeeding with a doctor, though most obstetricians are happy for it to be continued.

Remember: Adjust treatment based on individual patient response and always prioritise patient safety. If unusual or severe side effects occur, cease the medication and report them to your healthcare provider immediately.