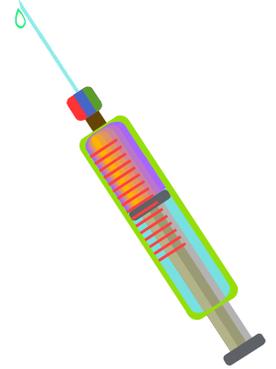




CORTISONE

A MIRACLE CURE OR A DEADLY PRESCRIPTION

Jon Burras



Imagine that you have an aching shoulder that lingers on for many months. You are not sure how or why this aggravation has begun. You have tried resting it, applying heat, and even some physical therapy. Nothing seems to make it better. You are eager to move on with your life and this persistent soreness just holds you back.

Walla! Enter the Western medical doctor. You are fed up with all these treatments so you turn to your medical doctor for relief. He promises to make your pain go away almost instantaneously with a simple injection of cortisone. He proudly claims that there are no side affects or long lasting problems with this drug. He assures you that it is safe. You go ahead and receive the shot in the arm and almost immediately your pain is gone. You cannot believe it. You think the doctor is a god and now you can go on with your life.

This scene is played out daily in many doctor's offices and hospitals across the country. Cortisone shots are given out like candy to a child on Halloween. Professional and amateur athletes often rely on these injections to continue competing. House wives and school kids alike are given cortisone shots all too frequently for such ailments as swelling or skin rashes. While cortisone may play a role in the most life threatening of medical emergencies it is being prescribed as often as aspirin. Cortisone injections are quickly becoming the cure-all drug, just as antibiotics have been in the recent past.

Cortisone injections are considered the miracle cure by many. Pain just seems to melt away after an injection. Those seeking instant relief are seldom disappointed. It would appear that the medical world has found the answer to everyone's pain. A shot of cortisone seems to be the new miracle drug that will rescue us from our pain.

While this trend goes on daily one might want to begin to be concerned when he finds out the truth behind cortisone injections. They appear to provide miraculous results in reducing swelling and eliminating pain but the potential side affects are alarming. While Western medicine has labeled pain itself as a disease this is not the case. Pain is only a messenger in the body that something is wrong and needs to be corrected. Killing the messenger, as cortisone shots do, only leads to further complications.

First off, cortisone does nothing to resolve the conflict that caused the pain or the swelling in the first place. The underlying problem continues to persist as the cortisone injection only suppresses the "symptoms" of the problem. This is in accordance with the principles and practices of Western medicine, where symptoms are treated and the cause is often ignored. The original problem will only become numbed out and further

complications often result later on. Left untreated, underlying problems only show up years later as more significant injuries.

Next, the potential side effects of cortisone injections can be disastrous. While many medical professionals belittle these complications the side effects can be quite harmful down the road.

Cortisone is a corticosteroid. This group of drugs, while produced naturally in the body, has long-term implications when administered as a medical treatment. Cortisone is not readily released from the body but will linger in the soft tissue for years or even decades to come. The muscles and fascia will store the cortisone like a sponge soaking up water.

Connective tissue is the most abundant of all the tissues in the body. Connective tissue consists of bone, cartilage, tendon, and fascia. While having many different purposes connective tissue is broken down and destroyed by cortisone. Cortisone injections eat away at the connective tissue over time. Fascia, a type of connective tissue, has many roles. Besides binding and wrapping muscles and organs fascia is also a part of the immune system. This liquid based material will help to contain and destroy disease when it is healthy and will help to spread infectious agents when unhealthy. As the cortisone breaks down and destroys fascia infections and diseases are more easily spread as one's immune system is weakened.

Besides directly weakening the fascia cortisone has indirect effects on the immune system as well. Kidney and adrenal gland function is impaired with long-term use, often resulting in a depleted immune system. In fact, many medical professionals refer to cortisone as "the death hormone" because of its negative effects on the body.

Cortisone injections have other deadly consequences. For instance, it is widely known that cortisone is a prime culprit in osteoporosis and bone loss. This occurs as bone is prevented from rebuilding itself and more bone is reabsorbed than normal. The result is that more bones will fracture due to calcium loss.

In addition, cortisone injections have also been linked to excess body hair growth, mental disturbances, headaches, muscle weakness, and cataracts. Prolonged cortisone use will also cause the smooth ends of bones to begin to wear away. Mood swings and excess weight gain are often other complications.

There is no such thing as a safe dose of cortisone. Permanent damage can be immediate and severe. While Western medicine has embraced this drug there are far better natural remedies to use. These remedies may include Vitamin C and Vitamin E as anti-inflammatories to reduce swelling. Massage or bodywork may be important to help relieve pain or tenderness in joints. A dietary cleansing may also be helpful to release some of the cortisone that may still be in your body if you have received these treatments.

It's your body. Treat it as a temple and it will serve you. Numb it out and it will become your worst enemy. The choice is yours.

Resources

Job's Body, Deane Juhan, Station Hill Press, Barrytown, NY, 1987

Primal Health, Michel Odent, Clairview Books, London, 2002

The Myth of Osteoporosis, Gillian Sanson, MCD Century Publications, 2003

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