

Guidelines for the use of Steroids in Headache

Steroids are useful in 3 areas although their use is not supported by any evidence base:

1. Cluster headache - Steroids can bring a cluster attack under control quickly. It is advisable not to use courses on more than 3 times a year.
2. Migraine – Migraine has an inflammatory process and steroids can be useful in migraine not under control.
3. Medication overuse headache – Effectively treating the underlying migraine but it may give the patient a break and opportunity to get off the regular analgesic medication.

The recommended dose is 1 mg/kg, up to 60 mg a day. Use 60 mg for 4 days and then gradually reduce over a 3 to 4 week period. It is probably good practice to cover with a PPI.

There is a patient information sheet on the use of steroids to alert to potential side-effects.