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Acute gout: steroids as effective as NSAIDS but fewer side effects

A systematic review found 6 studies comparing oral corticosteroids versus NSAIDS.¹ There was no difference in efficacy but there were significant differences in adverse effects. There was no difference in risks of gastrointestinal bleeding [relative risk (RR) 0.09, 95% CI 0.01-1.67]. There was a lower risk of indigestion (RR 0.50, 95% CI 0.27-0.92), nausea (RR 0.25, 95% CI 0.11-0.54), and vomiting (RR 0.11, 95% CI 0.02-0.56) with corticosteroid therapy.

Caution is needed with short courses of corticosteroids, with rare but statistically significant increases in fractures, sepsis, and thrombosis.²

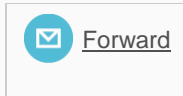
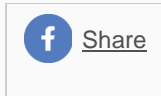
In acute gout, ruling out septic arthritis is essential and the patient's vital signs need to be normal before prescribing oral corticosteroids.

References:

1. Corticosteroid or Nonsteroidal Antiinflammatory Drugs for the Treatment of Acute Gout: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials (2017). [Click here](#)
2. Short term use of oral corticosteroids and related harms among adults in the United States: population based cohort study (2017). [Click here](#)

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