



Steroid Drugs

Common side effects of steroid therapy include:

- Increased panting, increased drinking and urination
- Increased appetite
- Weight gain manifested as a pot-bellied appearance
- Generalized muscle loss most prominent over the spine and head
- Dull hair coat

Stop steroid therapy and notify your veterinarian if your pet experiences:

- Decreased appetite or vomiting
- Dark or bloody diarrhea
- Dyspnea (difficulty breathing)
- Any extreme of the side effects listed above

Steroids can be divided into two classes. Anabolic steroids that build muscle bulk and catabolic steroids that actually cause muscle loss but fight inflammation, suppress the immune system, reduce brain swelling and provide moderate pain relief. The most common steroid is prednisone. Prednisone might be prescribed to reduce brain swelling associated with many diseases and cancers or to reduce inflammation of the brain, spinal cord, or lining of the brain.

In the short term, steroids may cause some side-effects like increased appetite, weight gain, pot-bellied appearance, muscle loss, panting, and more drinking and urination. Over the long term (or short term with high doses), steroids cause increased risk for developing potentially life threatening stomach or intestinal bleeding ulcers, infections, pancreatitis, high blood pressure and strokes. At BVNS we always recommend a diagnosis prior to steroids and try to use a combination of medications to reduce or eliminate the amount of steroids that are used.

Importantly steroids should not be taken with NSAIDs as this can cause dangerous gastric and intestinal bleeding.

None of the following medications should be given together:

Steroids	NSAIDs
Cortisone	Aspirin
Dexamethasone	Rimadyl/Carprofen
Methylprednisolone (Medrol)	Etogesic/Etodalac
Prednisone	Deramaxx/Deracoxib
Prednisolone	Metacam/Meloxicam
Triamcinolone	Firocoxib/Previcox
	Zubrin



To learn more about neurologic diseases, treatments, medications and our practice, please visit www.bvns.net.