**Steroid Emergency Card**

Dear Patient,

Spring Gardens Medical Practice would like to draw your attention to the recent patient safety alert on the new NHS Steroid Emergency Card. In August 2020, a joint National Patient Safety Alert was issued regarding the early recognition and treatment of adrenal crisis in adults.

.All patients on steroids with primary adrenal insufficiency are steroid dependent. In addition, some patients who take oral, inhaled or topical steroids for other medical conditions may develop secondary adrenal insufficiency and become steroid dependent.

Adrenal insufficiency means that your body cannot make the extra steroid boost that it needs during major illness. This would be a ‘adrenal crisis’.

**You have received this letter as you fit within the above criteria and should retain a copy of the new NHS Steroid Emergency Card**. You can view, print and download an electronic version of the new card from the [**Society for Endocrinology**](https://www.endocrinology.org/media/3873/steroid-card.pdf). Physical copies of the card are available to collect from local community pharmacies.

We would like to highlight the occurrence of adrenal crisis is relatively uncommon and medical staff are not always aware of the risk of adrenal crisis, or the correct clinical response should one occur. **Presenting your new NHS Steroid Emergency Card to medical staff can flag up your risks of an adrenal crisis and sets out the initial steps for managing it.**

The omission of steroids for patients with primary or secondary adrenal insufficiency can lead to adrenal crisis; a rare medical emergency which can be fatal if left untreated. If you become acutely ill or are subject to major body stressors, such as from trauma or surgery, you may require higher doses of steroids to prevent an adrenal crisis.

Patients at risks of adrenal insufficiency usually require their usual steroid dose to be increased at times of stress, intercurrent illness and surgical procedures. We advise patients at risks of primary and secondary adrenal insufficiency (steroid dependent) to ask their GP, clinical pharmacists or their specialist team for advice on ‘sick day rules’ to increase their oral glucocorticoid should they become unwell. [An easy read patient information leaflet on 'Sick Day' rules and further information is available here](https://www.leedsth.nhs.uk/assets/be1c37f891/Instructions_For-online-distribution_Final-Design2.pdf).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further clarification.