

# CJ TAKEAWAY

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Prednisone  
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## *In this CJ Takeaway:*

### **Prednisone: Risks vs. Benefits**

- Taken together, prednisone's side effects do not paint a pretty picture
- Prednisone, life saver drug
- Prednisone can reduce joint destruction & slow the progression of rheumatoid arthritis
- How to get the most benefit from Prednisone with the least amount of risk



For more information, go to: [www.CreakyJoints.org](http://www.CreakyJoints.org)  
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# PREDNISONE: RISKS VS. BENEFITS

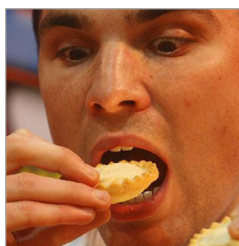
TAKEN TOGETHER, PREDNISONE'S SIDE EFFECTS DO NOT PAINT A PRETTY PICTURE



Mood Swings



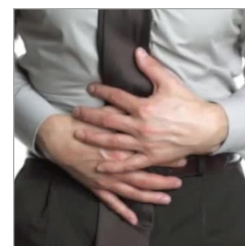
Insomnia



Insatiable Appetite



Weight Gain



Upset Stomach



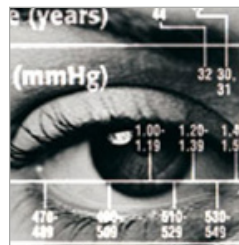
High Blood Pressure



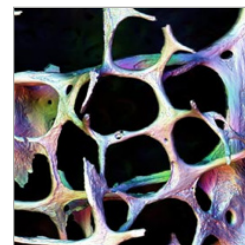
Increased Risk of Infection



Headaches



Eye Problems



Osteoporosis

With side effects like these, who needs prednisone? Why would anyone even consider taking or prescribing prednisone? The reason is simple. As health writer Marijke Vroomen Durining, RN has noted, "Prednisone [is] a nasty drug but also a life saver."

## PREDNISONE, LIFE SAVER DRUG



Prednisone is widely viewed as an excellent first-line anti-inflammatory for those living with the joint pain, stiffness and swelling that comes with conditions such as **rheumatoid arthritis**.

Prednisone works quickly, and as many patients have noted, seemingly miraculously.

"I still remember the first time I took Prednisone; it was quite an experience, to say the least. First, most of my pain and symptoms just seemed to magically disappear," wrote RA Guy, a superhero to the arthritis community, in his popular blog [rheumatoidarthritisguy.com](http://rheumatoidarthritisguy.com).



"Then, there was the euphoric buzz that made me feel like the Road Runner with Acme rocket-powered boots, after drinking a couple of cans of Red Bull."

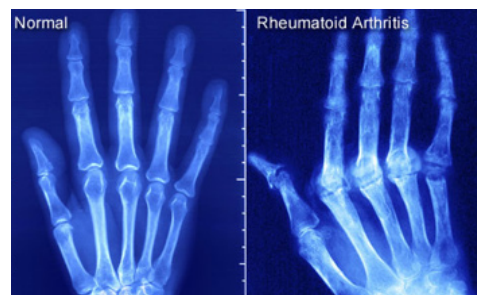
John Kirwan, professor of rheumatic diseases at the University of Bristol, has written that

patients do often report that drugs such as prednisone, "can often provide a quick improvement that can sometimes seem almost miraculous." And patients also often describe becoming "enthusiastically over-active," — think RA Guy in his rocket boots.

But what is not at all obvious to patients, according to Kirwan—and for which there is now very strong evidence to support—is that prednisone is able to reduce joint destruction.

## PREDNISONE CAN REDUCE JOINT DESTRUCTION & SLOW THE PROGRESSION OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Indeed, it is now believed that prednisone can not only reduce joint destruction but slow the progression of rheumatoid arthritis. In *Arthritis Today*, Maarten Boers, a professor of clinical epidemiology at the VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam said that, "steroids are no more toxic, and may be less so, than other drugs used to treat RA. And they do modify disease, slowing progression (as seen on X-ray) by as much as 50 percent in some studies."



## HOW TO GET THE MOST BENEFIT FROM PREDNISONE WITH THE LEAST AMOUNT OF RISK

In addition to taking steps to reduce your caloric intake and up your physical activity, when it comes to lowering risk from corticosteroids such as prednisone, the Mayo Clinic recommends that you try lower doses or intermittent dosing. "Newer forms of corticosteroids come in varying strengths and lengths of action. Ask your doctor about using low-dose, short-term medications or taking oral corticosteroids every other day instead of daily."

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