

Steroids and Asthma

With asthma, inflammation (irritation and swelling) is often in the airways of your lungs. When you come into contact with a trigger, your airways get even more swollen and fill with mucus. This causes asthma symptoms or a flare-up.

You can help manage asthma symptoms and have fewer asthma flare-ups by taking an anti-inflammatory medicine called a corticosteroid.

There are two ways to administer corticosteroids:

- Inhaled corticosteroids (ICS), which are breathed in through the mouth directly into the lungs
- Oral corticosteroids, which are taken as a pill or liquid

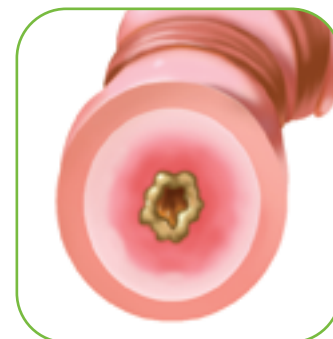
Both help decrease the swelling of the airways.

Inhaled Corticosteroid (ICS) Medicines for Asthma

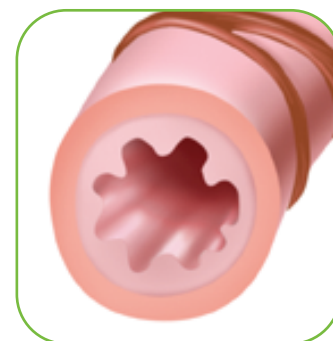
ICS are commonly used to treat asthma. They are long-term controllers used every day (as directed by your doctor). ICS are inhaled directly into the lungs. ICS also help decrease inflammation and swelling in the airways and help decrease asthma symptoms like wheezing and coughing. ICS are not quick-relief medicines.

Oral Corticosteroid Medicines for Asthma

Oral corticosteroids are most commonly used to treat moderate to severe asthma flare-ups for a short period of time. As a quick-relief medicine (not a controller medicine), they act to quickly decrease inflammation and help you feel better fast.



Inflamed airway



Normal airway

The steroids used to treat asthma are NOT the same as the steroids some athletes take to build muscles (anabolic steroids).

Talk to your doctor about medicines to help manage your asthma.