

# Dexamethasone (Decadron)

**Indication(s):** High Altitude Illness (AMS & HACE)

**Contraindications:** Hypersensitivity to corticosteroids and/or their formulation excipients.

**Precautions:** Use with caution in pre-existing mania/hypomania, depression or psychosis as co-administration with steroid can exacerbate symptoms. Glucocorticoids are immunosuppressive and can increase susceptibility to infections (Monitor).

**Adverse Effects (Short-Term Use):** (>1%)

Hypertension; hyperglycemia; nausea. (<1%)  
Cardiac arrhythmias; increased appetite, insomnia; euphoria; mood changes.

**Pharmacology:** Glucocorticoids decrease inflammation through multiple mechanisms, including stabilization of leukocyte lysosomal membranes, inhibition of macrophage accumulation in inflamed areas, and reduction of capillary permeability.

**Dosage and Administration:** Acute Mountain Sickness: 4 mg IV/IM followed by 4 mg IM/IV/PO q6h for 3 days; High Altitude Cerebral Edema: 4-8mg IV/IM initially, then 4 mg IV/IM q6h.