

## Adrenal Awareness Initiative

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This information is brought to you by the **Adrenal Alternatives Foundation** and was created to explain how to recognize an adrenal crisis.

This information is not to be used to diagnose or treat any condition or replace medical care.



### Adrenal Alternatives Foundation

501c3 non profit, patient empowerment organization that encourages, educates and advocates for sufferers of all adrenal diseases.

Adrenalalternatives.com  
adrenalalternatives@gmail.com  
Facebook.com/hopeforadrenaldisease  
Instagram: @AdrenalAlternatives  
Twitter: @AdrenalAdvocate

## Treating an Adrenal Crisis

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*Adrenal Alternatives Foundation*

## What is Adrenal Insufficiency?

### **Adrenal Insufficiency–**

Disease of the adrenal glands which results in the lack of cortisol production. Can also result in lack of DHEA, aldosterone and disrupt the balance of endocrine hormones and electrolytes.

Lack of cortisol is deadly. An adrenal crisis will occur if an adrenal patient does not have adequate cortisol replacement.

There are many forms of adrenal disease, but all require cortisol replacement therapy in the form of steroid medication.

Adrenal insufficiency is life threatening and cortisol replacement is necessary to sustain life in adrenal disease patients.

## Adrenal Crisis Symptoms

An adrenal crisis presents differently for everyone, depending on which form of adrenal disease the patient has.

### **Some possible symptoms are:**

Changes in Heart Rate, Blood Pressure and/or Mental Status. Weakness, Headache, Nausea, Vomiting, Trouble Breathing, Shaking, Anxiety, Flank/Back Pain.

These are not the only possible symptoms.

An adrenal crisis will result in death if left untreated.

## Treating an Adrenal Crisis

Always give an intramuscular emergency injection of Solu-Cortef to an adrenal patient showing crisis symptoms or if they are unconscious.

Recommended emergency department care is to administer steroids and electrolytes to stabilize the adrenal disease patient.

Cortisol is imperative to sustaining life in adrenal insufficient patients.

Withholding a steroid injection during a crisis may result in organ damage and if left untreated, adrenal crisis will result in death.

Administering a Solu-Cortef injection is imperative to successfully treating an adrenal crisis.

## How to Administer Solu-Cortef

- 1-Remove the two-chamber vial containing Solu-Cortef Act-O-Vial from the packaging.
- 2-Press the colored cap down to mix solvent with the powder solution of hydrocortisone.
- 3-Mix the contents until the powder is completely dissolved. The powder solution of hydrocortisone is completely dissolved once the solution is clear.
- 4-Remove the protective disc from the center of the plastic cap of the vial .
- 5-Wipe top of vial with alcohol swab to sterilize before inserting syringe into bottle.
- 6-Insert the syringe into the vial. Turn the vial upside down and draw the solution into the syringe.
- 7-Hold the syringe like a dart, and push the needle for 2/3 of its length into the chosen injection site at a right angle to the skin.  
(Give an injection into intramuscular tissue such as the buttock or in the upper thigh muscle.)

