

# Awareness of adrenal crisis prevention in long-term steroid users.

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## Introduction:

Patients taking corticosteroids for immune suppression are vulnerable to adrenal crisis during intercurrent illness or if steroids are stopped abruptly (see poster EP1238). Although patients on glucocorticoids for adrenal failure are routinely provided with sick day rules, we wished to ascertain whether patients on immunosuppressive steroids are appropriately counselled, in non-endocrine clinics

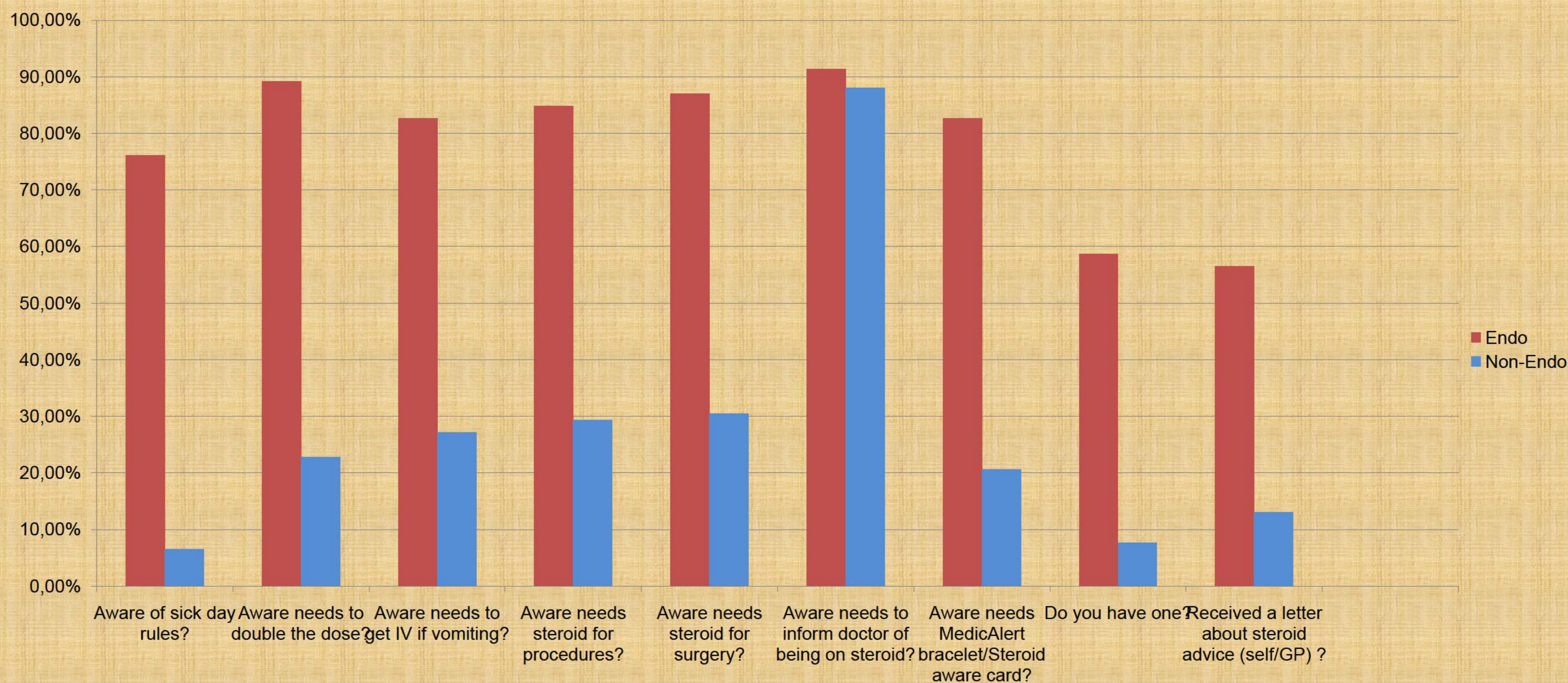
## Aim:

This study sets out to compare patient awareness of precautions that should be taken when on a long-term corticosteroid therapy, in endocrine and non-endocrine patients.

## Method:

A 11 point questionnaire was designed pertaining to important facts of which patients on long-term steroids should be aware. 63 patient were recruited from non-endocrine clinics – respiratory (n=21), rheumatology (n=19), gastroenterology (n=20) and nephrology (n=23). In addition, 17 patients were recruited from the pituitary clinic.

	Endo (46)		Non-endo(92)		p-value
	n	%	n	%	
Age	54		55		
Gender –(Males)	27	59%	45	49%	
Dose in hydrocortisone equivalent (median)	15mg	(5mg-30mg)	20mg	(4mg-120mg)	
Aware of sick day rules?	35	76.09%	6	6.52%	<0.001
Aware needs to double the dose?	41	89.13%	21	22.83%	<0.001
Aware needs to get IV if vomiting?	38	82.61%	25	27.17%	<0.001
Aware needs steroid for procedures?	39	84.78%	27	29.35%	<0.001
Aware needs steroid for surgery?	40	86.96%	28	30.43%	<0.001
Aware needs to inform doctor of being on steroid?	42	91.30%	81	88.04%	0.565
Aware needs MedicAlert bracelet/Steroid aware card?	38	82.61%	19	20.65%	<0.001
Do you have one?	27	58.70%	7	7.61%	<0.001
Received a letter about steroid advice (self/GP) ?	26	56.52%	12	13.04%	<0.001



## Conclusion:

Endocrine patients exhibited a significantly greater knowledge of precautions for steroid use. The data does highlight the lack of patient awareness of the sick day rules in patients on immunosuppressive therapy for non-endocrine conditions. Endocrinologist could assist colleagues in other specialities in the promotion of awareness of steroid sick day rules.

