

# What are Steroids?



Obstetrics & Gynaecology Department

## What Are Steroids ?

Steroids are a type of medication given to help the baby's lung mature and help prevent breathing problems after birth.

They are given to women who are having a planned caesarean before 36 weeks , multiple delivery ie. Twins or the possibility of a preterm delivery.

Steroids are generally safe in pregnancy, but they should be used with caution and under medical supervision.



## How Much Steroids ?

Two (2) injections 12 hours or 24 apart are given.

## Side Effects ?

- Steroids can cause some side effects such as
- Flushing of mother's face
- Glucose in the mother's urine for a day or two
- Difficulty sleeping for 1 or 2 days
- Reduced baby movements for 24 hours

- If you have gestational diabetes and given steroids, you may need to be in hospital to manage your blood sugar as steroids increase the blood sugar level.

## **At What Stage of Pregnancy Should Steroids Be Given?**

They are most effective when delivery happens within 7 days of administration and usually advised to be given between 24 and 34 weeks plus 6 days of pregnancy.

For planned Caesarean section before 36 weeks.

If the last dose is given between 24 hours and 1 week before baby is born there are still benefits.

If you go into preterm labour and the first course of steroid was many weeks ago, an additional single dose of steroid may be given.





## Contact us:

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