

Addison's Disease Emergency Information

from the NADF, US National Adrenal Diseases Foundation

"Those individuals suffering with Addison's disease, a severe or total deficiency of the hormones made in the adrenal cortex, need specific treatment when entering an emergency room. Addisonians may develop a dramatic change for the worse because of the deficient response from the adrenals to a sudden event like a flu virus, nausea, an accident or other stressful situation. This condition is referred to as an Addisonian crisis and is a medical emergency.

Proper emergency treatment of an Addisonian would include the following:

1. IV and IM hydrocortisone or cortisone.
2. Administer IV isotonic saline.
3. Continue IM cortisone until oral medication is tolerated.
4. Conditions which must be treated promptly: blood loss, fluid and electrolyte loss, infection, severe diarrhoea.

Consultation with the patient's endocrinologist is recommended.”