

## CMG 43 – ADRENAL CRISIS

(Revised: October 2019)



Adrenal crisis occurs in susceptible patients whose ability to synthesise cortisol is impaired. Consider adrenal crisis where there is a diagnosed adrenal insufficiency due to:

- **Addison's disease**
- Congenital adrenal hyperplasia
- Suprasellar tumours or brain injuries



Adrenal crisis occurs when a susceptible patient experiences:

1. An infection
2. Trauma (e.g. fracture, head injury)
3. A stress response (e.g. dehydration, AMI, intense physical exertion)

The MOST common signs of adrenal crisis are **hypotension** and **decreased LOC**.

Other signs and symptoms may include:

- Nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea
- Abdominal pain
- Fever
- Loss of appetite/anorexia
- Mottled appearance, peripherally shut down
- Lethargy, fatigue and weakness
- Tachycardia
- Light headedness/dizziness
- Hypoglycaemia
- Hyperkalaemia
- Hypotension, exacerbated by standing

### TREATMENT

ICP	Hydrocortisone (have a low threshold for treatment)	
ICP	Treat hypotension as per CMG 14	AP
ICP	Treat hyperkalaemia as per CMG 27	AP
ICP	Treat hypoglycaemia as per CMG 10	AP