

HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTION

Enquiries to: Rosalie Bebee
(090 222 4980)

Supersedes: OP 0003/91

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Subject: ACUTE SPINAL CORD INJURY AND METHYLPREDNISOLONE

This Operational Instruction supersedes the Operational Instruction 0003/91 dated 27 March 1991 recommending the use of Methylprednisolone in the initial management of acute spinal injuries.

The manufacturers of Methylprednisolone (Solu-Medrol), Upjohn, are appealing the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee (ADEC) decision to reject Upjohn's application for the acceptance of high dose bolus and infusion regime for Solu-Medrol use in acute spinal cord injuries of less than eight hours duration.

Under these circumstances, it would be unwise for medical practitioners in Western Australia to utilise high dose Solu-Medrol. Therefore, it is recommended that regional hospitals withdraw stocks of the drug. Medical practitioners attending regional hospitals should be made aware of this Operational Instruction.

Mr John K Ker, Head of Department, Sir George Bedbrook Spinal Unit, has kindly offered to advise clinicians in regional hospitals as the matter evolves. He can be contacted on (09) 382 7288 during normal hours or on (09) 384 0755 after hours.

Peter J Brennan
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH