23.8.2 ADRENAL INSUFFICIENCY

See section 8.2: Adrenal insufficiency (Addison Disease).

23.8.2.1 RELATIVE ADRENAL INSUFFICIENCY

E27.4/E27.9

DESCRIPTION

This is a transient, disproportionate reduction of glucocorticoids in relation to the severity of stress. Note that absolute cortisol levels may be normal. The prevalence of relative adrenal insufficiency is high in septic shock. See section 23.10: Sepsis in ICU for more details.

MEDICINE TREATMENT

See section 23.10: Sepsis in ICU.

23.8.2.2 ADDISONIAN CRISIS

E27.2

DESCRIPTION

Acute adrenal (Addisonian) crisis is a potentially fatal condition that occurs because of insufficient circulating corticosteroids. It is usually caused by impairment of the hypothalamic-pituitary axis, but may also be due to anatomic destruction of the adrenal gland (e.g. in disseminated tuberculosis or fungal infections, or other disease that infiltrate the adrenal gland), adrenal haemorrhage (e.g. septicaemia induced Waterhouse-Friderichsen syndrome), or more commonly, steroid withdrawal.

GENERAL MEASURES

Acute adrenal insufficiency is an emergency and requires immediate therapy.

Principles of management include:

» Treating precipitating cause.
» Providing organ support.

MEDICINE TREATMENT

- Hydrocortisone, IV, 100 mg 6 hourly.

LoE:IVb[i]