

**Table 58: Clinical evidence profile: Dual steroid (IT plus oral) versus steroid (oral) [IT dexamethasone or methylprednisolone plus oral prednisolone versus oral prednisolone]**

Quality assessment	No of patients	Effect	Quality	Importance
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No of studies	Design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Dual	Oral steroids	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute		
<b>PTA change or final score - Oral every day (follow-up 10 days - 7 weeks; Better indicated by lower values)</b>												
4	randomised trials	very serious <sup>1</sup>	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious <sup>2</sup>	none	87	90	-	MD 15.39 lower (18.3 to 12.48 lower)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
<b>PTA change score - Oral every other day (follow-up 10 days; Better indicated by lower values)</b>												
1	randomised trials	very serious <sup>1</sup>	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious <sup>2</sup>	none	15	16	-	MD 2.45 lower (5.00 lower to 0.10 higher)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
<b>Complete recovery (follow-up 3-12 weeks)</b>												
4	randomised trials	very serious <sup>1</sup>	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious <sup>2</sup>	none	47/133 (35.3%)	27.2%	RR 1.4 (0.86 to 2.27)	109 more per 1000 (from 38 fewer to 345 more)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
<b>Speech discrimination score improvement or final score - Oral every day (follow-up 10 days - 7 weeks; Better indicated by lower values)</b>												
3	randomised trials	very serious <sup>1</sup>	serious <sup>3</sup>	no serious indirectness	no serious imprecision	none	67	70	-	MD 6.50 higher (1.78 to 11.23 higher)	⊕○○○ VERY LOW	CRITICAL
<b>Speech discrimination score improvement score - Oral every other day (follow-up 10 days; Better indicated by higher values)</b>												
1	randomised trials	very serious <sup>1</sup>	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	no serious imprecision	none	15	16	-	MD 7.29 lower (9.08 lower to 5.50 lower)	⊕⊕○○ LOW	CRITICAL

<sup>1</sup> Downgraded by 1 increment if the majority of the evidence was at high risk of bias, and downgraded by 2 increments if the majority of the evidence was at very high risk of bias.

<sup>2</sup> Downgraded by 1 increment if the confidence interval crossed one MID or by 2 increments if the confidence interval crossed both MIDs.

<sup>3</sup> Significant heterogeneity unexplained by pre-defined subgroups