

Iatrogenic: Cushing syndrome, frequently a result of administration of large amounts of exogenous corticosteroids

Food dependent: Inappropriate sensitivity of adrenal glands to normal postprandial increases in secretion of gastric inhibitory polypeptide

ACTH, Adrenocorticotrophic hormone.

Adapted from Magiakou MA, Mastorakos G, Oldfield EH, et al: Cushing's syndrome in children and adolescents: presentation, diagnosis, and therapy, *N Engl J Med* 331(10):629–636, 1994.

Cushing syndrome is uncommon in children. When seen, it is often caused by excessive or prolonged steroid therapy that produces a cushingoid appearance ([Fig. 28-2](#)). This condition is reversible after the steroids are gradually discontinued. Abrupt withdrawal will precipitate acute adrenal insufficiency. Gradual withdrawal of exogenous supplies is necessary to allow the anterior pituitary an opportunity to secrete increasing amounts of ACTH to stimulate the adrenals to produce cortisol.