WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for treating an inflammatory condition of the gastrointestinal tract comprising administering to an individual in need thereof a pharmaceutical composition comprising less than or equal to 20 mg of a corticosteroid, wherein the composition has no significant systemic glucocorticoid or mineralocorticoid activity after oral administration, wherein the solid pharmaceutical composition disintegrates within 60 seconds in simulated saliva fluid when tested using the USP <701> Disintegration Test.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract comprises inflammation of the esophagus.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said condition is eosinophilic esophagitis.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said inflammation comprises inflammation of the glottis, epiglottis, tonsils, or oropharynx.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said condition is viral or bacterial pharyngitis.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said condition is gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), nonerosive reflux disease (NERD) or erosive esophagitis.

7. A substantially non-aqueous liquid pharmaceutical composition comprising a corticosteroid and a pharmaceutically acceptable liquid.

8. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 7 wherein the liquid is selected from the group consisting of pharmaceutically acceptable alcohols, oils, glycols, glycol ethers, pyrrolidones, polyethylene glycols, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, 2-pyrrolidone, glycerol, tetraglycol, glycerol formal, solketal, ethyl acetate, ethyl lactate, ethyl butyrate, dibutyl malonate, tributyl citrate, tri-n-hexyl acetylcitrate, diethyl succinate, diethyl glutarate, diethyl malonate, triethyl citrate, triacetin, tributyrin, diethyl carbonate, propylene carbonate, acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, dimethyl sulfoxide, dimethyl sulfone, tetrahydrofuran, caprolactam, N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide, 1-dodecylazacycloheptan-2-one, 1,3-dimethyl-3,4,5,6-tetrohydro-2(1H)-pyrimidinone, and combinations thereof.

9. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 8 wherein the liquid is selected from the group consisting of alcohols, oils; glycols; glycol ethers; pyrrolidones; polyethylene glycols, glycerol and combinations thereof.

10. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 9 wherein the liquid is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, glycerol, propylene glycol, glycerides, polyethylene glycol with a molecular weight between about 200 and 600, and combinations thereof.

11. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 7, further comprising a phase change agent dissolved or suspended in said liquid, wherein after administration to a patient, said composition undergoes a change in physical properties of the composition upon contact with the gastrointestinal tract of said patient, whereby contact of the corticosteroid with the gastrointestinal tract of the patient is enhanced and/or prolonged.

12. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein after administration to a patient, said composition precipitates onto the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract of the patient, whereby deposition of the corticosteroid onto the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract is enhanced and/or prolonged.

13. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein after administration to a patient, said composition forms a gel on contact with the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract of the patient, whereby the deposition of the corticosteroid onto the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract is enhanced and/or prolonged.

14. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 7, wherein after administration to a patient, said composition increases in viscosity upon contact with the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract of the patient, whereby the residence time of the corticosteroid on the mucosa of the intestinal tract is prolonged.

15. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein said phase change agent is a poorly water-soluble polymer.

16. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein said phase change agent is a thermosensitive polymer whose aqueous viscosity changes in the range of about 15 – 40°C.

17. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein said phase change agent increases in viscosity upon contact with the fluids of the oropharynx.

18. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein the phase change agent is a polymer selected from the group consisting of poly(N-isopropylacrylamide), poly(ethylene glycol-(DL-lactic acid-co-glycolic acid)-ethylene glycol) and mixtures thereof.

19. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 7, wherein said corticosteroid is selected from the group consisting of budesonide, fluticasone, flunisolide, ciclesonide, mometasone, tixocortol, beclomethasone, and salts, solvates, and esters thereof.

20. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 13, wherein said liquid is water-miscible and said phase change agent is a bio-gelling polymer having a low water-solubility.

21. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 20, wherein said water-miscible solvent is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, isopropyl alcohol, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, 2-pyrrolidone, glycerol, propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, tetraglycol, glycerol formal, solketal, ethyl acetate, ethyl lactate, diethyl carbonate, propylene carbonate, acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, dimethyl sulfoxide, dimethyl sulfone, tetrahydrofuran, and combinations thereof.

22. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 20, wherein said bio-gelling polymer is selected from the group consisting of polylactides, polyglycolides, polycaprolactones, polydioxannones, polycarbonates, polyhydroxybutyrates, polyalkyene oxalates, polyanhydrides, polyamides, polyesteramides, polyurethanes, polyacetals, polyketals, polyorthocarbonates, polyphosphazenes, polyhydroxyvalerates, polyalkylene succinates, poly(malic acid), poly(amino acids), chitin, chitosan, polyorthoesters, cellulose derivatives, cellulose esters, methacrylic acid and methacrylate polymers, and copolymers, terpolymers and mixtures thereof.

23. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 22, wherein said bio-gelling polymer is ethylcellulose.

24. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 17, wherein said increase in viscosity is at least 50%.

25. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 17, wherein said increase in viscosity is at least 100%.

26. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 17, wherein said increase in viscosity is at least 200%.

WHAT IS CLAIMS IS:

1. An oral, substantially non-aqueous liquid pharmaceutical composition comprising a corticosteroid, a pharmaceutically acceptable non-aqueous liquid, and a phase change agent dissolved or suspended in the non-aqueous liquid, wherein after oral administration to a patient contact with the gastrointestinal tract causes the composition to undergo a change in physical properties, whereby contact of the corticosteroid with the gastrointestinal tract of the patient is enhanced and/or prolonged.

2. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the non-aqueous liquid is selected from the group consisting of pharmaceutically acceptable alcohols, oils, glycols, glycol ethers, pyrrolidones, polyethylene glycols, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, 2-pyrrolidone, glycerol, tetraglycol, glycerol formal, solketal, ethyl acetate, ethyl lactate, ethyl butyrate, dibutyl malonate, tributyl citrate, tri-n-hexyl acetylcitrate, diethyl succinate, diethyl glutarate, diethyl malonate, triethyl citrate, triacetin, tributyrin, diethyl carbonate, propylene carbonate, acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, dimethyl sulfoxide, dimethyl sulfone, tetrahydrofuran, caprolactam, N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide, 1-dodecylazacycloheptan-2-one, 1,3-dimethyl-3,4,5, 6-tetrohydro-2(1H)-pyrimidinone, and combinations thereof.

3. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 2, wherein the non-aqueous liquid is selected from the group consisting of alcohols, oils, glycols, glycol ethers, pyrrolidones, polyethylene glycols, glycerol and combinations thereof.

4. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 3, wherein the non-aqueous liquid is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, glycerol, propylene glycol, glycerides, polyethylene glycol with a molecular weight between about 200 and 600, and combinations thereof.

5. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the change in physical properties is precipitation of the composition onto the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract of the patient, whereby deposition of the corticosteroid onto the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract is enhanced and/or prolonged.

6. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the change in physical properties is the formation of a gel on contact with the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract of the

patient, whereby the deposition of the corticosteroid onto the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract is enhanced and/or prolonged.

7. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the change in physical properties is an increases in viscosity upon contact with the mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract of the patient, whereby the residence time of the corticosteroid on the mucosa of the intestinal tract is prolonged.

8. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein said phase change agent is a poorly water-soluble polymer.

9. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein said phase change agent is a thermosensitive polymer whose aqueous viscosity increases upon warming in the range of about 15-40 °C.

10. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein said phase change agent increases in viscosity upon contact with fluids of the oropharynx.

11. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the phase change agent is a polymer selected from the group consisting of poly(N-isopropylacrylamide), poly (ethylene glycol-(DL-lactic acid-co-glycolic acid)-ethylene glycol) and mixtures thereof.

12. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein said corticosteroid is selected from the group consisting of budesonide, fluticasone, flunisolide, ciclesonide, mometasone, tixocortol, beclomethasone, and salts, solvates, and esters thereof.

13. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 6, wherein said non-aqueous liquid is water-miscible and said phase change agent is a bio-gelling polymer that is substantially water-insoluble, whereby the water-miscible liquid substantially mixes with the water from the digestive tract of the patient, whereby the bio-gelling polymer and the corticosteroid precipitate on the mucosa of the patient.

14. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 13, wherein said water-miscible liquid is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, isopropyl alcohol, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, 2-pyrrolidone, glycerol, propylene glycol, liquid polyethylene glycol, tetraglycol, glycerol formal,

solketal, ethyl acetate, ethyl lactate, diethyl carbonate, propylene carbonate, acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, dimethyl sulfoxide, dimethyl sulfone, tetrahydrofuran, and combinations thereof.

15. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 13, wherein said bio-gelling polymer is selected from the group consisting of polylactides, polyglycolides, polycaprolactones, polydioxannones, polycarbonates, polyhydroxybutyrates, polyalkyene oxalates, polyanhydrides, polyamides, polyesteramides, polyurethanes, polyacetals, polyketals, polyorthocarbonates, polyphosphazenes, polyhydroxyvalerates, polyalkylene succinates, poly(malic acid), poly(amino acids), chitin, chitosan, polyorthoesters, cellulose derivatives, cellulose esters, methacrylic acid and methacrylate polymers, and copolymers, terpolymers and mixtures thereof.

16. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 15, wherein said bio-gelling polymer is ethylcellulose.

17. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 10, wherein said increase in viscosity is at least 50%.

18. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 10, wherein said increase in viscosity is at least 100%.

19. The liquid pharmaceutical composition of claim 10, wherein said increase in viscosity is at least 200%.

20. Use of a substantially non-aqueous liquid pharmaceutical composition comprising a corticosteroid, a pharmaceutically acceptable liquid, and a phase change agent dissolved or suspended in the non-aqueous liquid for the manufacture of a medicament for treating an inflammatory condition of the gastrointestinal tract.

21. The use of claim 20, wherein said inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract comprises inflammation of the esophagus.

22. The use of claim 20, wherein said condition is eosinophilic esophagitis.

23. The use of claim 20, wherein said inflammation comprises inflammation of the glottis, epiglottis, tonsils, or oropharynx.

24. The use of claim 20, wherein said condition is viral or bacterial pharyngitis.

25. The use of claim 20, wherein said condition is gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), non-erosive reflux disease (NERD) or erosive esophagitis.