

## Family Medicine Clerkship Plain Language Summary Template

**Title:** Should patients with Sarcoidosis be treated with Steroids?

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**Plain Language Summary:**

Sarcoidosis is a disease where different parts of the body become inflamed and do not work properly. People with Sarcoidosis may feel tired and have a cough, fever, or headache. While there is no cure, most people who develop Sarcoidosis get better on their own without treatment.



Sometimes people are put on steroids to help with symptoms they are having with Sarcoidosis. The steroids do not cure the symptoms; they may only make them less severe. The problem is that these steroids have many side effects that may cause just as many problems as Sarcoidosis itself. Some of the side effects the steroids include; muscle weakness, confusion, vision changes, weight gain, and depression. There are some people with Sarcoidosis that do need these steroids because the disease has made it difficult for them to breath. These people benefit from the use of steroids and it is worth taking the risk of the side effects. However, many people who develop Sarcoidosis are prescribed steroids to help with their symptoms. Studies have shown that people treated with high doses of steroids for Sarcoidosis actually visit the Emergency Room or have to go to the Hospital three times more often. There is also a much greater risk of getting Sarcoidosis again after the steroids are stopped than people who are not treated at all.

While some people benefit from steroids when they have Sarcoidosis, many individuals are actually better off not getting steroids. Steroids should only be prescribed to individuals who really need them. Also, the people who need them should only take the minimum amount of steroids they need to try and prevent many of the known side effects.

**Additional Resources:**

PubMed Health: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001140/>

Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/sarcoidosis/DS00251>

WebMD: <http://www.webmd.com/drugs/mono-9383-PREDNISONONE+-+ORAL.aspx?drugid=6007&drugname=prednisone+oral&pagenumber=6>

**Key Words:**

Sarcoidosis

Treatment

Corticosteroids

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