



Understanding Your Lung Health: Sarcoidosis

Sarcoidosis is an inflammatory disease that causes cells to group together into clumps called granulomas. When too many granulomas form on an organ, they may interfere with the organ's function. Sarcoidosis can affect any organ in the body; however, lungs and lymph nodes are impacted in more than 90 percent of cases.

What Causes Sarcoidosis?

The exact cause of sarcoidosis is unknown. Some research suggests that an infection or exposure to something in the environment can trigger the immune system to overreact. Sarcoidosis isn't contagious, so you can't catch it from someone else like you could a cold or flu.

Sarcoidosis Symptoms

Many people with sarcoidosis think they have the flu or a respiratory infection before they're diagnosed. Sarcoidosis can affect many different organs, but it most commonly affects your lungs.

Common symptoms include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Night sweats
- Fatigue
- Wheezing or abnormal breathing
- Feeling congested

Questions To Ask Your Doctor

Some of these questions will not apply to your specific case of sarcoidosis. A good working relationship with a doctor who understands your disease will help you find solutions to living with sarcoidosis.

- What parts of my body are affected by sarcoidosis?
- What medications should I take and how do they work?
- What side effects could I expect from my medications?
- How will we follow up to see if my sarcoidosis is responding to treatment?
- How long should I take my medicine before we decide whether it's working?
- What should I look for as a sign that I am improving or getting worse?
- How might this disease affect my quality of life?

Hear advice from other patients with sarcoidosis, access a recorded webinar with a pulmonologist and connect with others living with sarcoidosis at Lung.org/sarcoidosis.

In addition, the Lung HelpLine is staffed by registered respiratory therapists that can answer your lung health questions for free at 1-800-LUNGUSA.