

Treatment

There is no cure for fatigue. The only proven therapy is combining cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) alongside slowly building physical activity with the guidance of a physiotherapist. However, there are a number of lifestyle choices that will combat fatigue:

Live healthily

Eat a healthy, varied diet. Do not smoke. Drink alcohol and coffee in moderation.

Look to the future and make plans!

It is better to look towards the future and not to keep looking back. Talk to loved ones and find out about your nearest SarcoidosisUK Support Group for inspiration.

Maintain a healthy sleeping pattern

Try to sleep during the day as little as possible (or not at all) especially if you experience restless or light sleep overnight. An afternoon nap is nice, but too often it can disrupt a healthy sleep-wake rhythm.

Consider your mental health

Having sarcoidosis is tough and can contribute to mental health conditions such as depression. Call the SarcoidosisUK Nurse Helpline or consider talking to a mental health specialist if you are concerned.

Finally, stay active!

Stay as active as possible, not only physically but also mentally and socially. If you can, exercise for 30 minutes a day at moderate intensity, 5 days per week.

Who We Are

SarcoidosisUK provide support and information to anyone affected by sarcoidosis. We also raise awareness and fund research. The vast majority of our funds go towards researching a cure. Contact us for information on our Support Groups network and free Nurse Helpline.

How You Can Help:

Donate to fund research:
www.sarcoidosisuk.org/donate

Get involved in medical research:
www.sarcoidosisuk.org/research/get-involved-sarcoidosis-research/

Thanks to:

Sarcoïdöse Belangenvereniging Nederland (SBN), The Dutch Sarcoidosis Society.

More information:

For more information on fatigue and how to manage it, visit:
www.sarcoidosisuk.org/information/types-of-sarcoidosis/sarcoidosis-fatigue/

Contact Us

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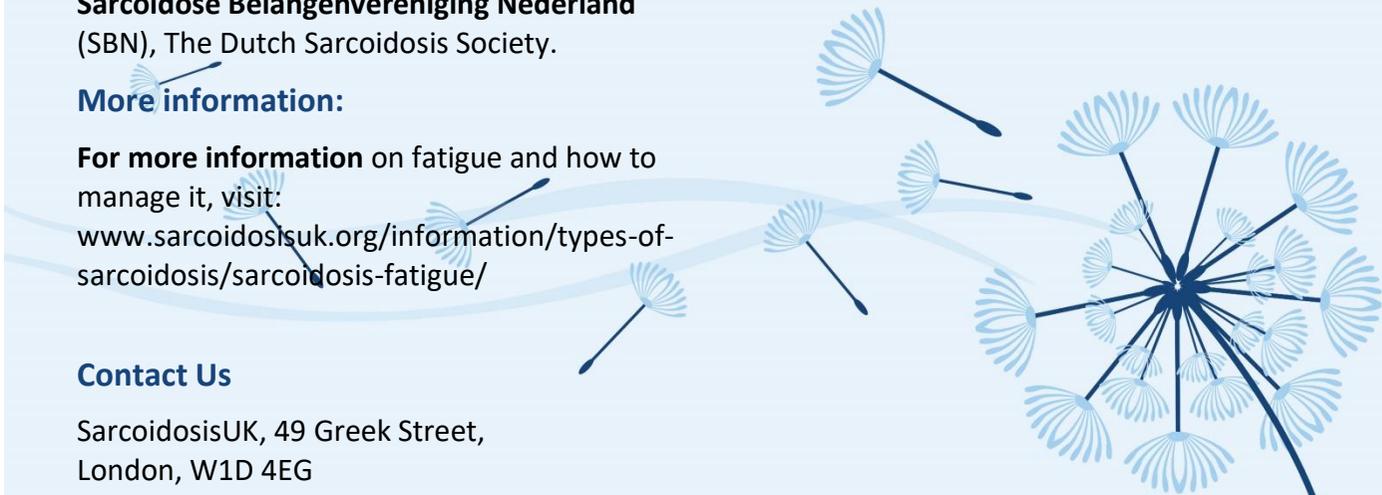
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SarcoidosisUK

SARCOIDOSIS and FATIGUE



SarcoidosisUK

Sarcoidosis and Fatigue

Fatigue, or extreme tiredness, is one of the most common complaints for sarcoidosis patients. It can have a very negative effect on their quality of life.

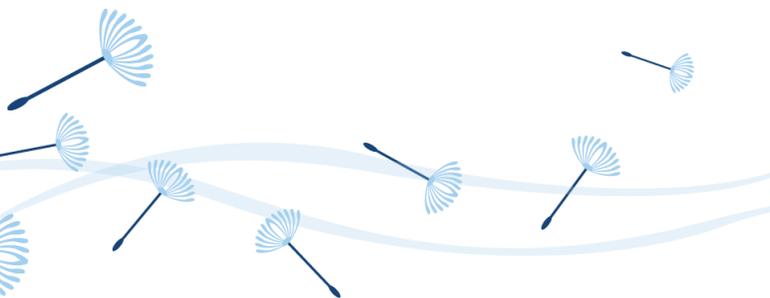
What is Sarcoidosis?

Sarcoidosis is a disease in which inflammation occurs in various organs of the body. White blood cells accumulate (also called granulomas) and can cause these organs to not work properly. The disease mostly affects people between 20 and 50 years old. In most patients, sarcoidosis disappears after a few years. The cause of sarcoidosis is unknown and there is no cure.

Refer to SarcoidosisUK's website and other leaflets for more detailed information on sarcoidosis.

What is Fatigue?

Fatigue has no simple definition but includes a lack of physical or mental energy or motivation. People describe it as an overwhelming sense of tiredness with no obvious cause. Fatigue cannot be exactly measured or shown with medical equipment.



Fatigue During Sarcoidosis

The majority of sarcoidosis patients display symptoms of fatigue at the time of diagnosis. This is probably caused by the inflammatory process of the disease. Certain proteins (cytokines) are produced by the immune system as a result of the infection. These proteins may cause symptoms of fatigue.

The majority of patients, both men and women, suffer from fatigue. The severity of sarcoidosis seems to have no influence on the degree of fatigue experienced.

Symptoms of Fatigue

Fatigue cannot be tested and there is not always a professional to consult. This can make it complicated to explain your fatigue to friends, family, colleagues and health and social care professionals. They may unhelpfully ask you to 'make a bit more effort' or 'stop being lazy.' It can make the problem worse that patients may still be able to be active and sociable *some* of the time. This can lead to tension at work and social situations.

It is often the case that patients in remission from sarcoidosis still feel tired. When these symptoms last for longer than 6 months, it may be called 'chronic fatigue'. It is not known exactly how many sarcoidosis patients suffer from chronic fatigue.

Chronic Fatigue

Although it is clear that chronic fatigue associated with sarcoidosis begins during the illness, the precise cause of the fatigue remains unknown.

Chronic fatigue after sarcoidosis is often accompanied by these symptoms:

- pain (throat, head, lymph nodes, joints)
- concentration and memory problems
- sickness after exertion
- anxiety and depression
- uncomfortable walking
- decreased muscle strength
- less physical activity

As such, chronic fatigue after sarcoidosis decreases quality of life significantly.

Techniques to Understand your Condition

No specific, medical examinations to prove fatigue are available. However, your doctor may offer a number of studies to investigate the complaint.

Fatigue Assessment Scale: Your doctor may measure and monitor your fatigue by asking you questions using the Fatigue Assessment Scale (FAS).

Sleep research: At home or in hospital you sleep for a night whilst connected to equipment which registers sleep. Sleep disorders may then be discounted as the cause of the fatigue.

Actigraph: A type of pedometer which records physical activity can be worn. This establishes how active you are and how to spread your energy more efficiently.