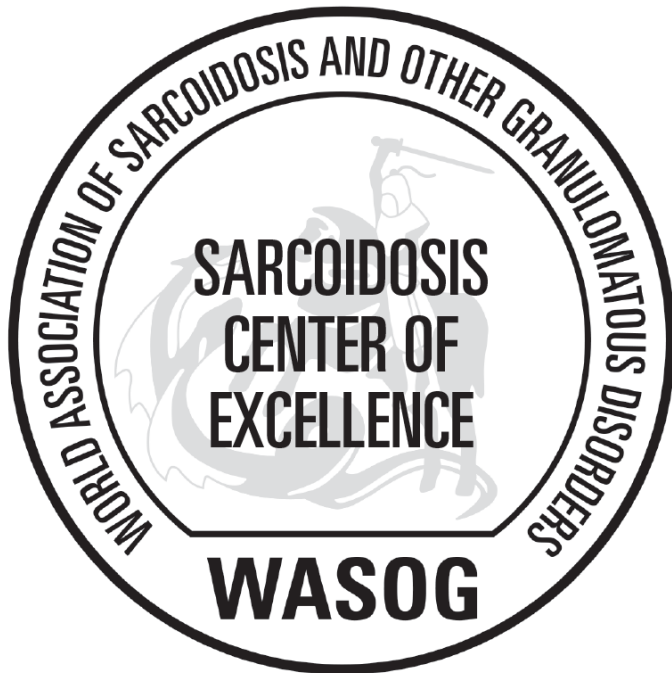


UM Sarcoidosis Program Named ‘Center of Excellence’

With its multidisciplinary approach to patient care, research and education, the University of Miami Sarcoidosis Program has been recognized as one of world’s leading centers for this complex multisystem disorder.

“Our program has met the criteria to be selected as a Sarcoidosis Center of Excellence by the World Association of Sarcoidosis and Other Granulomatous Diseases/Foundation of Sarcoidosis Research (WASOG-FSR),” said Mehdi Mirsaeidi, M.D., M.P.H., associate professor of medicine and clinical public health sciences, and director of the UM and VA Sarcoidosis Programs. “This designation provides formal recognition of our multidisciplinary team’s commitment to serve the needs of sarcoidosis patients and stay current with the ongoing advances in the field.”

The Miller School program, which serves patients at UHealth Tower and the Miami Veterans Administration Medical Center, is the only center in Florida to receive the WASOG-FSR designation and one of just 22 centers in the world. The UM program has also been recognized by the International Sarcoidosis Society for excellence in care.



Since its launch in 2015, the patient-centered UM program has become the largest in the Southeast U.S. “We now care for more than 500 sarcoidosis patients,” Dr. Mirsaeidi said. “Our team helps manage this condition, prevent organ damage, and improve the overall quality of life. We offer our patients a supportive home with multiple options for treatments, including clinical trials.”

The program’s multidisciplinary team includes pulmonary and critical care physicians, pharmacists, and specialists in cardiology, ophthalmology, nephrology, neurology, dermatology, gastroenterology, and rheumatology.

“With this collaborative approach, our patients receive comprehensive care and the benefits of cutting-edge research,” Dr. Mirsaeidi said. For instance, UM researchers are developing and validating molecular diagnostic tests for personalized sarcoidosis treatment, working to improve treatment outcomes, and studying genetic connections.

Sarcoidosis is a rare multisystem disorder characterized by inflammation in the lungs, skin, lymph nodes, or other areas. Its cause is unknown. Symptoms usually develop between 20 and 40 years of age, and may include small lumps, or granulomas, that typically heal and disappear on their own. Other signs

include shortness of breath, a chronic cough, wheezing, weight loss, fatigue, and chest pain.

Pulmonary sarcoidosis can develop into pulmonary fibrosis, which distorts the structure of the lungs and can interfere with breathing. Bronchiectasis, a lung disease in which pockets form in the air tubes of the lung and become sites for infection, can also occur.

Because the symptoms of sarcoidosis can resemble other conditions, Dr. Mirsaeidi is actively educating UM medical students and community physicians about the autoimmune disease. “We would like to expand our educational program to South America, where we can help academic institutions, hospitals, and physicians deliver leading-edge care to their patients,” he said.

For more information about the UM/VA program, go to umsarcoidosis.com.

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