

# Oral steroids in sciatica: The OASIS Randomised Controlled Trial

ACTRN12619001716156

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Status	RECRUITING
Phase	Phase 4
Sponsor	The University of Sydney
Enrollment	200 participants

## Plain Language Summary

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Sciatica is a sharp, often debilitating pain that radiates down the leg — usually caused by a compressed or irritated nerve root in the lower back. It can make standing, walking, and sleeping very difficult. While many cases improve on their own, the pain can be severe in the short term, and finding treatments that provide rapid relief is important.

This randomised controlled trial, called OASIS, is testing whether a short course of oral prednisolone (a corticosteroid, or steroid anti-inflammatory tablet) taken for up to 13 days can meaningfully reduce leg pain compared to a placebo. Steroids work by reducing the inflammation around the compressed nerve, which is believed to be a key driver of sciatica pain.

You may be eligible if you are an adult who has had sciatica for 6 weeks or less, with at least moderate leg pain, and signs of nerve involvement (such as pain going below the knee, numbness, or weakness). People with serious spinal conditions, who have already had recent spinal injections or surgery, have diabetes, active infection, uncontrolled high blood pressure, a history of stomach ulcers, or who are pregnant or breastfeeding are not eligible.

## Key Eligibility Criteria

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### Inclusion (1)

- Adults with acute sciatica (no more than 6 weeks since onset) of at least moderate pain intensity in leg pain or results in at least moderate interference with daily activities during the previous week. Sciatica is defined as radiating pain into one leg below the knee, accompanied by lumbar nerve root or spinal-nerve involvement as indicated by the presence of at least one of these clinical features: dermatomal leg pain, myotomal weakness, sensory deficits, or diminished reflex.

### Exclusion (1)

- Known or suspected serious disease of the spine (e.g. cauda equina syndrome); planning to undergo spinal surgery or other interventional procedures (e.g. an epidural injection) for sciatica during the treatment period; having had spinal surgery or other interventional procedures (e.g. an epidural injection) in the preceding 6 months; having used a systemic glucocorticoid (for any condition) via any method of administration since the start of this episode of sciatica; contraindications to glucocorticoids (e.g. known allergy to prednisolone, active infection, diabetes, pre-diabetes and previous history of gestational diabetes, active gastrointestinal bleeding (peptic ulcer), uncontrolled hypertension and heart failure, psychosis, immunosuppression) or precautions to glucocorticoids where risks outweigh potential benefits; for females: pregnant, breast-feeding, or planning conception during the treatment period.

## Locations (1 total)

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NSW, Australia

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<https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/TrialReview.aspx?ACTRN=ACTRN12619001716156>

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