

Prednisone/salbutamol

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Lack of drug effect: case report

In a case series of 2 patients, a 42-year-old man was described, who exhibited a lack of efficacy during treatment with prednisone and salbutamol for asthma [*not all routes and dosages stated*].

The man presented to the emergency department (ED) with chest pain, cough, fever and wheezing lasting one week. He had various comorbidities including asthma. He showed asthma exacerbation and was treated with salbutamol [albuterol] and prednisone taper. However, his shortness of breath worsened despite treatment.

The man was admitted and examinations showed tachypnoea and tachycardia. His chest x-ray showed bilateral infiltrates. Subsequently, he tested positive for COVID-19. Therefore, he started receiving treatment with unspecified steroids, terbutaline and off label treatment with azithromycin, ceftriaxone and magnesium for COVID-19. However, his condition worsened and he required ICU admission and intubation. He was treated with fentanyl and midazolam, along with empirical piperacillin, tazobactam and vancomycin. He also received off label treatment with hydroxychloroquine 200mg every 12 hours, azithromycin, tocilizumab and zinc-sulfate 220 [*units not stated*] two times a day, for COVID-19. He developed complications of sepsis and seizure-like activity with brain dysfunction consistent with metabolic encephalopathy. By day 18, his condition improved and he was extubated. On day 33, he was evaluated for depression diagnosed with depressive disorder possibly related to cytokine storm following COVID-19. His symptoms regressed after treatment with escitalopram, melatonin and mirtazapine.

Alpert O, et al. Cytokine storm induced new onset depression in patients with COVID-19. A new look into the association between depression and cytokines -two case reports. *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity - Health* 9: Dec 2020. Available from: URL: <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbih.2020.100173>

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