



# Steroids to Reduce Pain in Acute Pharyngitis

*Ann Fam Med* 2010;8:iii. doi:10.1370/afm.1078.

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## HOW IT WORKS

In each issue, the *Annals* selects an article or articles and provides discussion tips and questions. We encourage you to take a RADICAL approach to these materials and to post a summary of your conversation in our online discussion. (Open the article online and click on "TRACK Comments: Submit a response.") You can find discussion questions and more information online at: <http://www.AnnFamMed.org/AJC/>.



## CURRENT SELECTION

### Article for Discussion

Korb K, Scherer M, Chenot JF. Steroids as adjuvant therapy for acute pharyngitis in ambulatory patients: a systematic review. *Ann Fam Med*. 2009;8(1):58-63.

## DISCUSSION TIPS

This article provides an opportunity to consider an uncommon treatment for a common problem, and also to examine methods for systematic reviews.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What questions are addressed by this article? How do the questions fit with what already is known on this topic?

- How does the way the questions were framed affect the utility of the findings?
- How strong are the study designs for answering the questions?
- To what degree can the findings be accounted for by:
  1. How studies were selected or excluded?
  2. Heterogeneity in how the treatments or outcomes were assessed?
  3. Confounding (false attribution of causality because 2 variables discovered to be associated actually are associated with a third factor)?
  4. Researcher bias?
  5. Chance?
- How does the quality assessment of the articles (shown in Table 3) relate to other methods for assessing study quality, such as the CONSORT Guidelines for clinical trials: <http://www.consort-statement.org/consort-statement/>, the Strength of Recommendation Taxonomy (SORT): <http://www.aafp.org/afp/20040201/548.html>, or other systems to rate the strength of scientific evidence: <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/epcsums/strengthsum.htm>?
- What are the main study findings?
- What can we learn from the subgroup analyses?
- How comparable are the study populations to your practice? What is your judgment about the transportability of the findings?
- How (if at all) could this study change your practice?
- What important researchable questions remain?

## References

1. Stange KC, Miller WL, McLellan LA, et al. *Annals Journal Club: It's time to get RADICAL.* *Ann Fam Med*. 2006;4(3):196-197. <http://annfammed.org/cgi/content/full/4/3/196>.