



New studies on safety of ICS/LABA combo therapy in children and adolescents with asthma

In a study mandated by the FDA, the VESTRI trial involving children (4-11 years) and the AUSTRI trial (≥ 12 years) with uncontrolled asthma demonstrated that salmeterol in a fixed-dose combination with fluticasone was associated with the risk of a serious asthma-related event that was similar to the risk with fluticasone alone. This supports data from the Best Add-on Therapy giving Effective Responses (BADGER) Study showing that the addition of a long-acting beta-agonist (LABA) was more effective than increasing the dose of inhaled glucocorticoids in controlling asthma.

What does this mean for clinical practice? Most children will have their asthma controlled by low-dose inhaled glucocorticoids if taken regularly through an appropriate device. If asthma is not controlled, rather than uncritically adding on further therapies, pediatricians are advised to:

- check the adequacy of technique with the medication-delivery device
- make sure that parents and children understand their asthma treatment plans
- verify whether the family is collecting enough prescriptions to cover the need for regular medications — something achieved by only one in six families in one study

As a reminder, there is no evidence for the use of a combined inhaler as first-line preventive therapy in children. However, for the unusual child with asthma who needs more than low-dose inhaled glucocorticoids to control the disease or who has persistent, objectively documented, variable airflow obstruction, the present study provides reassuring evidence that combination inhalers containing a LABA and an inhaled glucocorticoid are safe.

Stempel DA, et al. Safety of Adding Salmeterol to Fluticasone Propionate in Children with Asthma. *N Engl J Med.* 2016 Sep 1;375(9):840-9.
Stempel DA, et al. Serious Asthma Events with Fluticasone plus Salmeterol versus Fluticasone Alone. *N Engl J Med.* 2016 May 12;374(19):1822-30

Highlights

- Updated treatment evidence
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Spotlight on Community Health Services, Inc—Hartford, CT

In August, Community Health Services, Inc. was trained in Easy Breathing and in September received training in how to conduct Spirometry. Since the training, they have embraced the program and are in the process of creating an asthma clinic and integrating several Easy Breathing forms into their Electronic Health Records system. What is the secret to their success?

- They assigned the nursing manager as their Easy Breathing Site Leader.
- They picked their busiest days of the week to implement Easy Breathing.
- Each exam room has all the forms needed to assess a child for asthma.
- They have educational materials readily available to demonstrate inhaler technique, information on triggers, and general information about controlling asthma.
- There are asthma medication posters and other asthma posters up in each exam room.
- Every child with asthma receives a treatment plan.

Congratulations and Welcome CHS!! To date they have enrolled **598** children into the program.



Easy Breathing Enrollment

From July 2015 thru June 2016, Easy Breathing[®] Statewide has surveyed 7,294 individuals. Of those surveyed, 26% have an initial diagnosis of asthma. In total, 153,041 individuals have been surveyed since 1998.

Top Producing Sites per District for Quarter

7/1/2016-9/30/2016

District 1: Staywell Health Center (Children's Health Center)

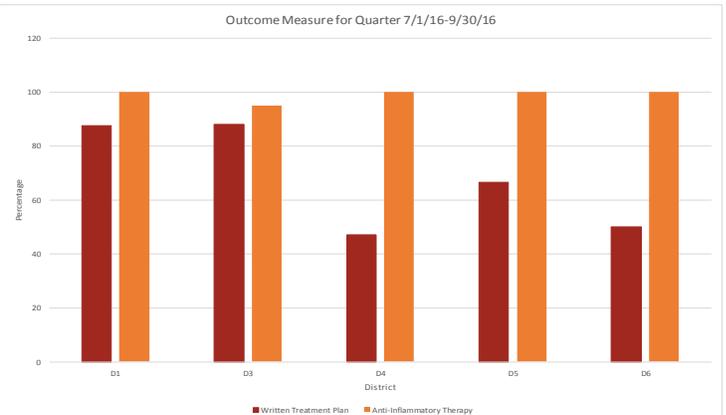
District 3: Community Health Services

District 4: Vernon Pediatrics & Adolescent (Healthwise)

District 5: Meriden Pediatric Associates

District 6: Milford Pediatric Group

Congratulations to Kelly Sullivan who has received her PhD and will be assuming new responsibilities at Fairfield University. We will miss Kelly, and wish her the best in her new position!



Program Goals

100% for Written Treatment Plans for children diagnosed with persistent asthma.

95% for Anti-inflammatory Therapy for children diagnosed with persistent asthma.

Welcome New Staff!

The Asthma Center would like to welcome a new member to its team. Tregony Simoneau, MD a pediatric pulmonologist at Connecticut Children's, is the Co-Director of the Asthma Center with Jessica Hollenbach, PhD. Dr. Simoneau will provide pediatric pulmonary expertise and will help to oversee Easy Breathing Statewide activities.

We would also like to welcome Anita Hoey, RN, as our newest Easy Breathing Program Coordinator. Anita comes with over 30 years of nursing experience! She is replacing Kelly Sullivan and covering Easy Breathing sites in the New Haven and Fairfield counties.

Important Updates from the Asthma Center

- ⇒ Effective 7/1/2016, the State of CT Department of Public Health agreed to fund Easy Breathing Statewide for one more year. We thank you for reaching out to your local representatives to help keep Easy Breathing in the state budget.
- ⇒ Jessica Hollenbach, PhD, is on maternity leave as her twin boys arrived on December 13th. In the interim, Dr. Simoneau and Christine Langton, MSW, MPH will be managing the Easy Breathing Program. Please contact Ms. Langton at clangton@connecticutchildrens.org with any questions.



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