



THE ASTHMA CENTER

AT CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

STATEWIDE EASY BREATHING[©] NEWS

SPRING 2022

DR. CALEB WASSER NAMED EASY BREATHING PHYSICIAN CHAMPION!

Please welcome Caleb Wasser, MD, as our new Easy Breathing Physician Champion!

Dr. Wasser is an attending in the Primary Care Department at CCMC. He lives in West Hartford with his wife and two children, and enjoys giving back to the community as a pediatrician in downtown Hartford. Raised in Connecticut and a graduate of Trinity College, Dr. Wasser has been affiliated with CT Children's from a very young age—initially, as a patient in the GI department, and then as a pediatric resident. He completed his training in 2018. Prior to medical school, Dr. Wasser was the clinical supervisor at his father's adult pulmonary medicine practice and received extensive training in asthma care; experience that naturally led him to an interest in asthma and respiratory care.



Dr. Wasser will fulfill an important role in the Easy Breathing program, providing a crucial link between the community and the physicians that serve the community. Physician Champions are responsible for training providers in

Easy Breathing, encouraging and maintaining provider participation, and ensuring program integrity, which includes re-training providers, clinics, and practices that may be having difficulty implementing the program. Their duties also extend to supervising the Program Coordinator, reviewing asthma treatment plans for completeness and consistency, communicating and rectifying problems with the provider; meeting with participating clinics and practices quarterly to foster a community-based approach to pediatric asthma; and reviewing program data at the community-level, and discussing new projects, needs or problems. The Physician Champion also meets with program staff regularly to review program data and represent the Easy Breathing program at the community level. The Physician champion is someone in the community who has the respect of the community and is interested in its betterment.

Dr. Wasser is excited for his new role as an Easy Breathing Physician Champion, and looks forward to expanding the program throughout Connecticut. We know Dr. Wasser will be an exceptional champion as Easy Breathing continues on its trajectory of disseminating state-of-the-art asthma management guidelines to primary care clinicians.

HIGHLIGHTS

- New Easy Breathing Physician Champion
- SMART Therapy FAQs
- Easy Breathing Enrollment Data
- Pulmonologist's Corner



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SMART THERAPY FAQs

Does ICS-formoterol work as quickly as SABA?

The onset of action of formoterol is as rapid as albuterol, but it has the added advantage of a longer duration of action.

What dose of ICS-formoterol should be used for SMART?

Step 3 in children 4-11 years – budesonide-formoterol 80/4.5 µg, one puff once daily, with one puff as needed for symptom relief
Potential to increase the maintenance dose to one puff twice daily in step 4

What is the interval for prn SMART dosing?

Take one puff whenever needed for symptom relief, every 5-10 minutes
If symptoms persist after a few minutes, another dose can be taken, but no more than four doses for children 4-11 years on a single occasion

How do I prescribe more than 1 inhaler per month?

Label the prescription with SMART

Prescribe specifically

1 inhaler for home; 1 inhaler for school (or 1 inhaler for prn)

OR

2 prescription, one for daily and one for prn

Rx1: Symbicort (80/4.5) 1 puff bid Dispense 1 60 inhalations

Rx2: Symbicort (80/4.5) 1 puff as needed up to 8 puffs/day Dispense 1 120 inhalations

What about pre-exercise treatment?

Based on available data, it would be reasonable for a patient receiving SMART who



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needed exercise prophylaxis to take one inhalation of their ICS-formoterol inhaler before exercise

If ICS-formoterol is unavailable, such as in a school setting, it would be acceptable to use albuterol for pre-exercise prophylaxis.

How can I counsel my patients to make the switch to SMART?

Try this script:

For the next while, carry both the old and new reliever with you. When you feel the need for your reliever, first try the new (combination reliever). If it does not provide the expected effect within minutes, you have the option to resort to the SABA.

EASY BREATHING ENROLLMENT

In total, 163,686 individuals have enrolled in Easy Breathing since inception. Of those enrolled, our largest age group belongs to the 0-4 year age-range, with over 60,500 children accounting for 37% of total enrollments. 45,278 children ages 5–9 and preteens between the ages of 10-14 make up 28% and 23% of enrollment respectively, with 20,274 adolescents ages 15 and up accounting for the remainder of enrollments.

Of this total, 48% of enrolled individuals identify as female and 49% as male. Over half (51%) of enrolled participants identify as white/Caucasian, with Black and Hispanic participants accounting for 11% and 20% of enrollments, respectively. 37% of individuals enrolled in Easy Breathing have received a new asthma diagnosis through the program.





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PULMONOLOGIST'S CORNER

Spring-Time Allergies & Antihistamines

by Dr. Melanie Collins, MD

Hello friends!

While it is difficult to imagine spring when we have so many news reports of impending snow storms, it is important to recognize that mother nature continues on her pollen producing path regardless of snow on the ground or sunshine in the skies.

For that reason, I would recommend when seeing patients in the office to remember to screen for spring time allergies, and to encourage folks to restart any antihistamines by mid-February. In addition, safety and efficacy profiles of newer antihistamines (like cetirizine, fexofenadine, loratadine, etc) are better for children. So in families who have relied on Benadryl here and there for years, consider switching them to a newer antihistamine with less drowsy side effects.

For patients who do find the oral antihistamines problematic in terms of side effects (dry mouth, drowsiness) consider using an intranasal antihistamine like azelastine or intranasal steroid or combination of the two. Remember when using azelastine to counsel patients that taste is very unpleasant but does resolve after using the product *consistently* for approximately 7-10 days. For those with ocular symptoms, this is the time to stock up on eye drops, as there were some significant shortages last year.

Hope you all stay happy and healthy and feel comforted by the thought that Mother Nature is not stopped by the weather!

Me!



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