



Asthma Education - Providers

Understanding the Importance of Control Medications

Asthma management relies on the appropriate use of both rescue and controller medications. The **Asthma Medication Ratio** (AMR) is a key quality measure that assesses medication adherence, with a higher AMR indicating better control of asthma.

Benefits of Controller Medications:

- **Reduces exacerbations:** Daily inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) and ICS/LABA combinations decrease airway inflammation.
- **Decreases reliance on rescue inhalers:** Proper controller use minimizes the need for short-acting beta-agonists (SABAs).
- **Improves long-term lung function:** Maintains stable airways and prevents remodeling.
- **Reduces emergency visits and hospitalizations:** Effective control therapy leads to fewer acute exacerbations.

Strategies to Enhance Patient Adherence

Studies show effective asthma management relies on four key components: patient education, reducing exposure to triggers, monitoring symptoms and lung function, and appropriate medication use.

To improve adherence, consider the following strategies:

1. **Education** – Emphasize the importance of daily controller medication and the dangers of overusing rescue inhalers.
2. **Simple Treatment Plans** – Prescribe combination ICS/LABA inhalers to streamline therapy and enhance compliance.
3. **Regular Follow-Ups** – Monitor medication adherence at each visit and reinforce the benefits of consistent controller use.
4. **Technology** – Recommend digital inhalers or mobile apps to help patients track medication use.
5. **Address Common Barriers** – Identify and resolve issues such as medication costs, incorrect inhaler technique, and side effects to optimize adherence.

Measuring and Optimizing AMR

- Aim for an **AMR > 0.5** (controller medications should be prescribed at least twice as often as rescue inhalers).
- Conduct medication reconciliation regularly.
- Encourage asthma action plans tailored to each patient's needs.

By prioritizing controller medication adherence, healthcare providers can significantly improve asthma management and patient outcomes.

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