

# Reviewing asthma patients on high-dose inhaled corticosteroids (ICS)

In high doses, ICS can increase the risk of Type 2 diabetes, cataracts, adrenal suppression and osteoporosis. In children adrenal suppression and Addisonian crisis have been reported in doses of 800mcg or more. For this reason, stepping down ICS dose is important (particularly in children) and should be done once control has been established and risk minimised.

Safe and effective asthma assessment needs to take into account both risk and control – see [HERE](#) for table of definition of good control and asthma risk. Risk can further be divided into the risk of the disease and the risk of treatment, in particular higher doses of ICS.

Because asthma is a variable condition, this will be a dynamic process, and clinicians can be comfortable with the concept of adjusting anti-inflammatory therapy according to need. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the process of stepping down ICS in asthma.

This practice improvement worksheet helps to identify patients in whom control has been achieved, and risk minimised, so that dose reduction can be considered.

It is also important to ensure that the asthma diagnosis is reviewed, particularly in children where the diagnosis was made under the age of 5 years, and that other diseases are considered either as alternative explanations for symptoms, or as co-morbidities to the patient's asthma.

- ✓ Safe effective prescribing
- ✓ Better more appropriate treatment for people with asthma
- ✓ Management in line with national guidance

## PCRS-UK Resources:

- PCRS-UK Quick Guide to the diagnosis and management of asthma in primary care
- PCRS-UK Table of equivalent corticosteroids
- PCRS-UK Opinion sheets Cost effective prescribing, Asthma Review, High risk asthma, Asthma in adolescence, Exacerbations of asthma, Asthma action plans
- PCRS-UK Asthma Checklist
- PCRS-UK Protocols Telephone consultations, Acute asthma, Asthma assessment and review

## Other Resources:

- Brozek JL *et al.* *JAMA Internal Medicine* Oct 8, 2012, Vol 172, No. 18
- BTS/SIGN Guideline for the management of asthma - see <http://www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/fulltext/101/index.html>
- National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guideline for the use of inhaled steroids in the management of asthma (Adults: <http://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/TA138> and Children: <http://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/TA131>).

Practice Improvement Worksheets, DRAFT version 01, Date of Expiry December 2015

*This series of practice improvement worksheets are intended for members to use within their practice. This is a pilot project, prepared in DRAFT format. Please tell us what you think! We would like feedback on the accuracy, completeness, usefulness and outcomes of the resource. To submit your feedback visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EQUIPIIW>*

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