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Asthma Quality Standards

Quick Reference Guide for Healthcare Professionals

Based on the latest Ontario Health Quality Standards for asthma care in adults and children, this reference guide focuses on primary care and community practice settings to help healthcare providers spot where care may be improved, assist in developing and implementing a plan and provide guidance on measuring results.

Diagnosis

≥ 16 years of age: Adults clinically suspected of having asthma should complete spirometry to demonstrate reversible airflow obstruction. If negative, other lung function tests should be conducted to confirm the diagnosis of asthma as soon as possible.

< 16 years of age: Children six-years-old and older who are clinically suspected of having asthma should complete spirometry to demonstrate reversible airflow obstruction. If negative, other lung function tests should be conducted to confirm the diagnosis of asthma as soon as possible. Children aged one-to-five are diagnosed with asthma after documentation of signs or symptoms of airflow obstruction, reversibility of symptoms with asthma medications, and no clinical suspicion of an alternative diagnosis.

Asthma Control

Individuals with asthma should have a structured assessment at least annually to determine their level of asthma control and reasons for poor control.

Asthma Medication

Individuals with asthma should receive appropriate medication and devices based on their age and current level of asthma control, including early initiation of regular inhaled anti-inflammatory therapy.

Self-Management Education and Asthma Action Plan

Individuals with asthma and their caregivers should receive self-management education and a personalized Asthma Action Plan that is reviewed regularly with a healthcare professional.

Referral to Specialized Asthma Care

Adults who meet criteria for severe asthma or have other appropriate indications should be referred to specialized asthma care.

Children and adolescents with asthma with appropriate indications should be referred to specialized pediatric asthma care.

Follow-Up After Discharge

Individuals who have had an emergency department visit or been hospitalized for an asthma exacerbation should have a follow-up assessment within two-to-seven days after discharge.



Planning, Implementation & Measurement Resources

Asthma Quality Standards

The asthma quality standards provide guidance on how to improve asthma care. Detailed definitions and rationale are provided to help you understand each quality statement as well as practical steps to implement and measure improvements.

[Asthma Care in the Community for People 16 Years of Age and Older \(2020\)](#)

[Asthma Care in the Community for People Under 16 Years of Age \(2020\)](#)

Putting Standards into Practice

Putting Quality Standards into Practice: Getting Started Guide outlines a process for using quality standards to improve the care you provide. It includes tools and templates such as the **Action Plan Template**.

Patient Guides

Parent/Caregiver Guide: Encourage parents/caregivers of your patients who are under the age of 16 to access this guide. This guide can help to improve the understanding of their child's asthma and what to expect in managing their condition, as well as better prepare them for their healthcare visits. We've prepared a quick reference guide to start the conversation.

Adult Patient Guide: Encourage your patients who are 16 years of age and older to access this guide. This guide can help to improve their understanding of asthma, what to expect in managing their condition, and how to better prepare for their healthcare visits. We've prepared a quick reference guide to start the conversation.

For More Information

Lung Health Foundation clinical asthma resources:

- [Asthma Action Plan \(Pediatric, Adult\)](#)
- [Asthma Action Plan E-Module](#)
- [Asthma Action Plan Yellow Zone Formulation Table \(≥ 16 years old\)](#)
- [Respiratory Medications Reference](#)
- [Inhalation Device Instruction Videos](#)
- [Severe and Difficult to Control Asthma Referral Tool](#)
- [Asthma Diagnosis and Management Algorithm for Primary Care](#)
- [Primary Care Asthma Program \(PCAP\) Spirometry Manual](#)
- [Archived OTN Webinars:](#)
 - [Dr. Dhenuka Radhakrishnan, MD FRCPC: How do we manage childhood asthma? Introducing the Ontario Health Asthma Quality Standards for children and adolescents \(2020/10/28\)](#)
 - [Dr. Samir Gupta, M.Sc., FRCPC: Asthma Action Plans: Keeping Asthma Under Control \(Especially in the Virtual World\) \(2020/5/27\)](#)

Lung Health Foundation patient asthma resources:

- [Lung Health Line](#) staffed by Certified Respiratory Educators: 1-888-344-5864
- [Taking Control – A Guide to Living With Asthma](#)
- [lunghealth.ca](#)

Canadian Thoracic Society (CTS) [Asthma Guidelines](#)

Sources: Ontario Health quality standards [Asthma Care in the Community for People Under 16 Years of Age \(2020\)](#)
Ontario Health quality standards [Asthma Care in the Community for People 16 Years of Age and Older \(2020\)](#)



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The Lung Health Foundation is the leading national charity dedicated to improving the lung health of Canadians.

We are ending gaps in the prevention, diagnosis and care of lung disease. We also advocate for patients, fund life-saving research and provide trustworthy information to help Canadians breathe better, regardless of income or location.