

Formulary Factsheet: Respiratory Corticosteroids in Asthma

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

The various inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) do not differ in efficacy. Based on evidence and cost effectiveness, beclometasone is recommended as a first choice option. Budesonide or fluticasone may be considered as second line choices.

There are now two CFC-free beclometasone dipropionate pressurised metered dose inhalers (pMDIs) available in the UK: Clenil Modulite® and Qvar®. Beclometasone dipropionate MDIs should be prescribed by brand name to avoid confusion.

What is the difference between Clenil Modulite® and Qvar®? Both of these CFC-free products contain the same active ingredient, but they are **not equipotent** because the formulation of Qvar® results in smaller particles and greater lung deposition compared to Clenil Modulite®. This could have safety implications if the patient receives the wrong product. Note that Clenil Modulite® is licensed for use in children; Qvar® is not licensed for use in children under 12. Please note **Clenil Modulite®** is the 1st Line Formulary Choice

Beclometasone, fluticasone and budesonide are available in a range of formulations at different doses and for a range of ages. See BNF for details.

The potency ratio of beclometasone and fluticasone is generally quoted as 2:1 **BUT** this does not apply to Qvar® and Fostair® (a combination product) because of their smaller beclometasone particle size.

Adverse effects are class effects and do not differ significantly between the different inhaled corticosteroids at either low or high doses. Increased doses of ICS are associated with an increased risk of local and systemic adverse effects.

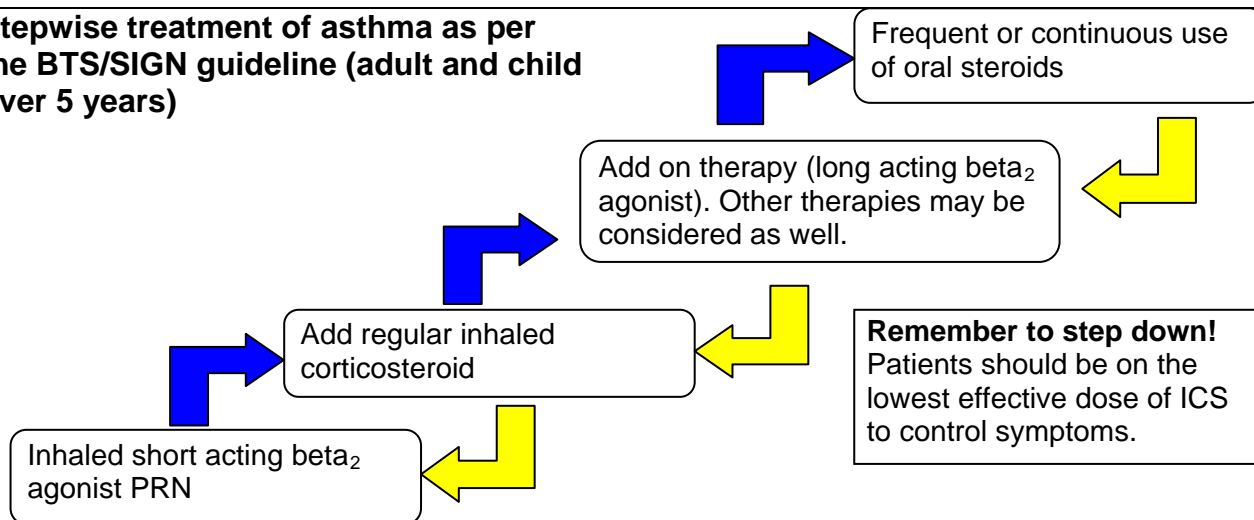
Total Daily Dose comparison CFC-free beclometasone (micrograms/day)

Clenil Modulite	200-250	300	400-500	600-750	800-1000	1100	1200-1500	1600-2000
Qvar	100	150	200	300	400	500	600	800

Beclometasone and fluticasone have a potency ratio of 2:1.

Clenil Modulite® should be prescribed at the same dose as the currently available CFC-containing beclometasone dipropionate pMDIs. Qvar® has a 2 to 2.5 fold **greater potency** than the currently available CFC-containing beclometasone dipropionate pMDIs and therefore is prescribed at a lower dose.

Stepwise treatment of asthma as per the BTS/SIGN guideline (adult and child over 5 years)



There is no difference in efficacy and adherence in giving inhaled steroid and long acting B2 agonist in combination or in separate inhalers.

Advise patients to rinse their mouth well after inhalation of inhaled steroids to prevent oral candidiasis.

Community pharmacies are able to offer medicines use reviews to people with asthma and COPD to ensure that they get the most from their treatment

Give a steroid card to patients using inhaled corticosteroids in high doses for long periods.

The Bottom Line

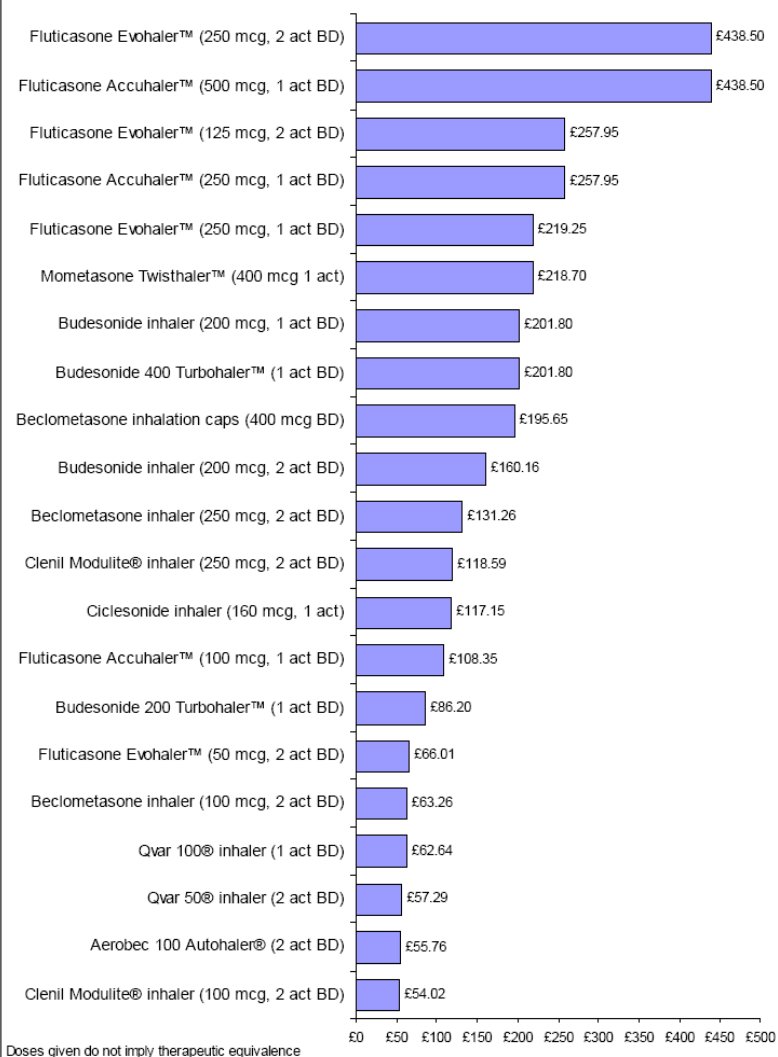
- Check compliance and inhaler technique before increasing dose/changing preparations
- Offer advice on healthy diet, regular exercise and **STOPPING SMOKING**
- Remember to use the step up step down process so that corticosteroids are used at the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time

References

NHS Clinical Knowledge Summary – Asthma Management
BTS/SIGN guideline on the management of asthma (May 2008)
Adapted from work undertaken by NHS Dorset
Asthma.co.uk-inhaler technique

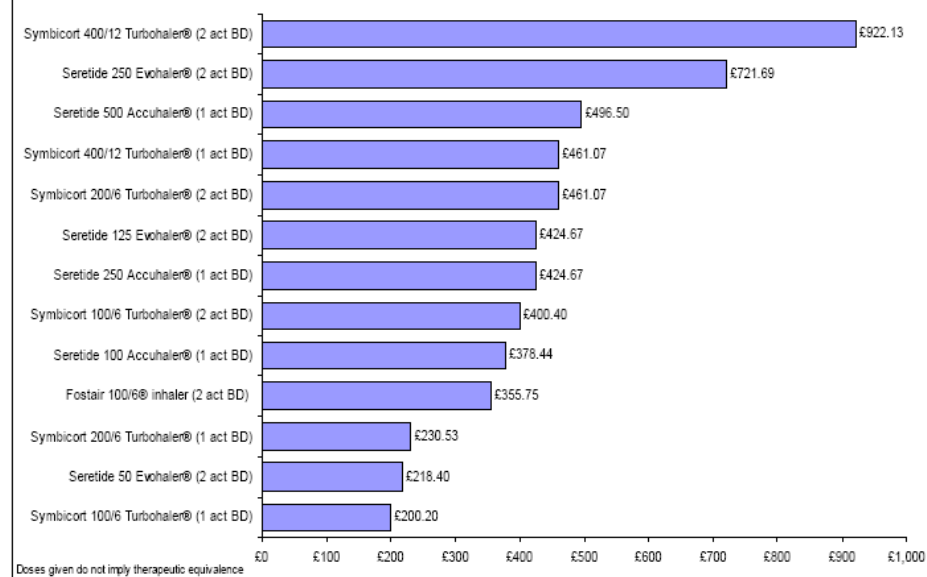
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October 2010: Corticosteroids - cost of 1 year's treatment



3.2 Corticosteroid & bronchodilator inhalers

October 2010: Corticosteroid & bronchodilator inhalers - cost of 1 year's treatment



Fostair Beclomethasone dipropionate 100mcg & formoterol fumarate 6mcg	120 doses	Not licensed in children <18 years
Symbicort Budesonide 100mcg & Formoterol fumarate 6mcg Budesonide 200mcg & Formoterol fumarate 6mcg Budesonide 400mcg & Formoterol fumarate 12mcg	120 doses 120 doses 60 doses	Not licensed in children <6 Not licensed in children <12 Not licensed in children <12
Seretide 100 Accuhaler Fluticasone 100mcg/salmeterol 50mcg Seretide 250 Accuhaler Fluticasone 250mcg/salmeterol 50mcg Seretide 500 Accuhaler Fluticasone 500mcg/salmeterol 50mcg Seretide 50 Evohaler Fluticasone 50mcg/salmeterol 25mcg Seretide 125 Evohaler Fluticasone 125mcg/salmeterol 25mcg Seretide 250 Evohaler Fluticasone 250mcg/salmeterol 25mcg	60 doses 60 doses 60 doses 120 doses 120 doses 120 doses	Child >5 Child >12 Child >12 Child >5 Child >12 Child >12
Clenil Beclomethasone dipropionate 50mcg, 100mcg, 200mcg, 250mcg	200 doses	Licensed for children <12, spacer recommended
Qvar Beclomethasone dipropionate 50mcg, 100mcg	200 doses	Not licensed in children <12 years
Flixotide Accuhaler - 50mcg, 100mcg, 250mcg, 500mcg Evohaler - 50mcg, 125mcg, 250mcg	60 doses 120 doses	Child >5 Child >4
Pulmicort Budesonide Aerosol 100mcg, 200mcg Turbohaler 100mcg Turbohaler 200mcg Turbohaler 400mcg	120 doses 200 doses 100 doses 50 doses	Child >2 Child >5 Child >5 Child >5