Steroid tablets and injections can be lifesaving. But they also have side effects. You can talk to your doctor if you are worried.*

Repeated use of steroids can cause:

- Tiredness
- Weight gain
- Trouble sleeping
- Thinning of the bones
- Diabetes
- Cataracts

These side effects can also lead to anxiety or depression.

There are four questions to help you spot if you may have severe asthma:

1. Do you have asthma symptoms/attacks more than twice a week?
2. Do you wake up due to asthma symptoms more than twice a month?
3. Do you need to take oral corticosteroids (steroid tablets) twice a year or more?
4. Do you refill your reliever inhaler more than twice a year?

If you have answered yes to any of these questions, you should speak to your doctor about reviewing your treatment plan with an asthma specialist.4

Step forward with your asthma

Supporting conversations with your general practitioner (GP) or family doctor

If you don’t have the correct diagnosis, you may keep getting symptoms, even if you take your current medicines as advised by your doctor.2

For example, not everyone with severe asthma will wheeze. This could mean your diagnosis isn’t quite right.1

If you have severe asthma, you may find you make many trips to your GP or family doctor over time.1

It can be hard to recognize and manage the symptoms of severe asthma.2,3

For further reading, please search online:

- PULSAR checklist for severe asthma
- GAAPP Define your Asthma

*You should always talk to your doctor before changing or stopping any medications.

This resource was developed by a multi-stakeholder collaboration including patients and representatives from patient organizations including: Asthma Canada, Asthma UK, Allergy UK representing the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients’ Associations (EFA), Association Asthme & Allergies (France), Allergy & Asthma Network (USA), Global Allergy and Airways Patient Platform (GAAPP), and also GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). The project was supported by an unrestricted grant from GSK.