

# 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.**<sup>\*2</sup>

For example, not everyone with severe asthma will wheeze. **This could mean your diagnosis isn't quite right.**<sup>1</sup>

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

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

**5 Your doctor may give you steroid tablets or injections to try and control your symptoms,**<sup>2,4</sup> such as:

- 1 Prednisone
- 2 Prednisolone
- 3 Methylprednisolone<sup>2</sup>

**6 Steroid tablets and injections can be lifesaving. But they also have side effects.** You can talk to your doctor if you are worried.<sup>\*3,4</sup> 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<sup>3</sup>

**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.**<sup>4</sup>



**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.

1. Data on file; 2. Winders TA, et al. A patient-centered description of severe asthma. Patient. 2019;12(5):539–549; 3. Global Initiative for Asthma. Global Strategy for Asthma Management and Prevention, 2021. Available at: <http://www.ginasthma.org>. Accessed May 04, 2021; 4. Global Allergy & Airways Patient Platform. Define your asthma, 2019. Available at: <https://gaapp.org/define-your-asthma/>. Accessed Apr 08, 2021.