

Albuterol Limit Clinical Update

For Pharmacists

Beginning **August 18, 2022**, MO HealthNet will implement quantity limits for short-acting beta agonist inhalers and nebulizer solutions. The limits for inhalers will apply only to adults while the nebulizer solution limits will apply to all ages.



Short-Acting Beta Agonists (SABA) Quantity Limits

Using three or more SABA inhalers per year is associated with an increased risk of severe exacerbations; using 12 or more SABA inhalers per year is associated with an increased risk of death. In 2021, over 40% of MO HealthNet participants with asthma received more than three inhalers and 6.4% received more than 12 inhalers. To reduce these health concerns, beginning August 18, 2022, MO HealthNet will implement the following quantity limits on SABA inhalers for adults and nebulizer solutions for all ages. These limits will not apply to participants diagnosed with cystic fibrosis.

- 3 (SABA-only) inhaler canisters every 6 months for adults (no quantity limit for pediatric participants)
- 120 (SABA-only) vials every 2 months for participants of all ages.

SMART as an Alternative

Single Maintenance And Reliever Therapy (SMART) is an alternative to SABA-only treatment of asthma, and MO HealthNet covers this option without any prior authorization and at no cost to the participant. SMART utilizes the combination of inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) and formoterol (i.e. Symbicort). **Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA)** recommends that patients with asthma receive an ICS-containing inhaler as a controller medication to reduce risks of serious asthma exacerbations.

How Should I Bill SMART?

- When prescriptions are written with PRN usage, MO HealthNet will approve claims when billed for 2 inhalers for a 30 day supply.
- MO HealthNet also covers, without prior authorization, spacers and peak flow meters.
- MO HealthNet will cover a 72-hr emergency supply when medication is required outside the Pharmacy Help Desk's hours. Inhalers must be dispensed in the smallest package size available. For additional details, see Section 13.6.C of the MO HealthNet Pharmacy Provider Manual.

Rx

John Doe

12 years or older

EXAMPLE

Symbicort 160/4.5 - Take [1,2] puffs in the morning and evening every day. AND Take 1 puff as needed for relief of asthma symptoms.

Dispense 2 inhalers for a 30-day supply

Please counsel patients: If patient needs more than 12 puffs total of Symbicort in a day, contact provider for directions per asthma action plan. Instruct patient to carry their Symbicort inhaler with them for rescue use.