



Albuterol Limit Clinical Update

Beginning **August 18, 2022**, MO HealthNet will implement quantity limits for short-acting beta agonist inhalers for adults and nebulizer solutions for all participants.

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 participants:

- 3 (SABA-only) inhaler canisters every 6 months for adults (no quantity limit for pediatric participants)
- 120 (SABA-only) vials every 2 months for all participants
- These quantity limits do not apply to participants diagnosed with cystic fibrosis

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.

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. Benefits of SMART include:

- Formoterol works as fast as albuterol, while the duration of action for formoterol is much longer
- ICS gives more anti-inflammatory treatment when asthma and airway inflammation are worsening
- Reduced risk of severe asthma exacerbations compared to SABA-only asthma treatment

Please see **Asthma Management Guidelines: Focused Updates 2020** for insight into how to implement SMART into your practice.

NOTE: ICS-formoterol should not be used as the reliever medication when the patient is taking a different maintenance ICS-LABA. These patients should receive a SABA.

How Should I Prescribe SMART?

- MO HealthNet also covers, without prior authorization, spacers and peak flow meters.
- Some pharmacies are not used to seeing prescriptions for SMART. To avoid "Refill Too Soon" rejections at the pharmacy, make sure you write your prescriptions for PRN use.

A sample prescription is below; however, providers should use their own professional judgment when prescribing:

Rx

John Doe

12 years or older

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.