**Emergency blue inhalers Short acting beta agonist (SABA) Alert**

We are concerned about the number of emergency blue inhalers you have requested.

Prior to December 2024, inhaled SABA was recommended to be used as required as a reliever therapy for people with symptomatic asthma. In a small minority of people with asthma with infrequent, short-lived wheeze, and normal lung function, occasional use of inhaled SABA reliever therapy was considered as potentially the only treatment needed to manage their symptoms.

However a study in 2022 showed an association was identified in the UK across all asthma severities between having 3 or more SABA prescriptions over 1 year and experiencing severe asthma exacerbations. It is known that 3 people a day can die of poorly controlled asthma. Based on the findings of the review, regulatory action was taken in 2023 to strengthen the warnings in the approved UK product information for SABA medications on the risk of masking asthma deterioration by overuse of blue relievers.

The guidance now recommends that the majority of people with asthma should be controlled on either AIR or MART treatment without the need for blue SABA inhalers. These medications are anti-inflammatory maintenance/preventer medications. For this reason we now monitor the number of emergency blue inhalers you request so that we can identify poor asthma control, offer you better plans, and when relevant further investigation or referral to the respiratory team.

<https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/symptoms-tests-treatments/treatments/reliever-inhalers>

