

SAND abstract No. 126 from the BEACH program 2008–09

Subject: Asthma and allergic rhinitis in general practice patients

Organisation supporting this study: Merck, Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd

Issues: Prevalence of asthma in general practice patients; prevalence of allergic rhinitis in general practice patients; prevalence of both asthma and allergic rhinitis in general practice patients; medications taken for asthma management; medications taken for allergic rhinitis management; asthma medications previously used by patients currently taking combination asthma medications.

Sample: 3,003 patients from 102 GPs; data collection period: 01/04/2008 – 05/05/2008.

Method: Detailed in the paper entitled 'SAND Method 2008-09' available at: www.fmrc.org.au/publications/SAND_abstracts.htm.

Summary of results

The age and sex distributions of surveyed patients were similar to those of patients at all BEACH encounters 2007–08. Of the 3,003 respondents, 689 (22.9%, 95% CI: 20.4–25.5) had asthma and/or allergic rhinitis. The prevalence of asthma was 14.6% ($n = 439$, 95% CI: 12.7–16.5), and of allergic rhinitis 12.7% ($n = 382$, 95% CI: 10.6–14.9). Both conditions were present in 4.4% of surveyed patients ($n = 132$, 95% CI: 3.3–5.5), in 5.2% of those aged 2–14 years, and in 4.5% of those aged 15 years and over.

Information about medications was provided for 428 patients with asthma, with 85.1% taking at least one asthma medication. Nearly half (45.8%) were taking one medication, 33.6% were taking two medications and 5.6% were taking three medications. A total of 556 asthma medications were recorded. The most common medications for asthma were the short-acting beta-2 agonists (SABA) (54.7%), followed by fixed dose combinations of inhaled corticosteroids with long-acting beta-2 agonists (ICS/LABA) (30.6%). The most common generic medication most often was salbutamol (46.9% of all asthma medications), followed by fluticasone/salmeterol (23.0%).

Information about medications used was provided for 376 patients with allergic rhinitis, of whom 71.3% were taking at least one allergic rhinitis medication. Nearly equal proportions were taking nasal corticosteroids (38.0%) and antihistamines (37.2%). There were 163 asthma medications listed for patients with allergic rhinitis – SABA were the most commonly recorded (55.2%), followed by the ICS/LABA combination (31.3%).

Of 152 patients currently taking a combination ICS/LABA, 141 patients (92.8%) had previously taken at least one 'single' asthma medication. Nearly half (48.0%) had taken two previous medications.

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PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The shaded section of the following forms asks questions about **ASTHMA and ALLERGIC RHINITIS**.
 You may tear out this page as a guide to completing the following section of forms.

INSTRUCTIONS

Ask **ALL** of the **next 30 PATIENTS** the following questions **in the order in which the patients are seen**.

Please **DO NOT** select patients to suit the topic being investigated.

Asthma and/or allergic rhinitis

Please advise whether this patient has been diagnosed with **asthma** and/or **allergic rhinitis** (either seasonal or perennial).

If the patient does not have asthma or allergic rhinitis you should **end the questions here**.

Asthma medication

For patients with asthma, please advise the **medications** the patient is **currently taking for asthma**. In the space provided please give the **name and form** and **regimen** of each medication the patient is currently taking.

If the patient is **not currently taking medication** for their asthma please tick the box labelled '**No medication for asthma**'.

Allergic rhinitis medication

For patients with allergic rhinitis, please use the tick boxes to advise the **medications** the patient is **currently taking for the management of their allergic rhinitis**.

If the patient is **not currently taking medication** for their allergic rhinitis please tick the box labelled '**No medication for allergic rhinitis**'.

Previous asthma medication

For patients with asthma who are **currently** taking a **combination** product of **inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) and long acting beta agonist (LABA)** please use the tick boxes to advise which medications the patient was taking **prior to commencement** of the combination product.

Does this patient have:

- Asthma
- Allergic rhinitis (seasonal or perennial)
- None of the above → **End questions**

Current medication/s for asthma is:

Name & Form Strength Dose Frequency

- _____
- _____
- _____
- No medication for asthma

Current medication/s for allergic rhinitis is:

- Nasal corticosteroid
- Antihistamine
- Other _____
(please specify)
- No medication for allergic rhinitis

If the patient is currently taking an ICS / LABA combination product for asthma what medications were they taking prior to its commencement? *(Tick all that apply)*

- Short acting beta agonist
- Inhaled corticosteroid
- Long acting beta agonist
- Leukotriene receptor antagonist
- Other _____
(please specify)
- No medication