

ICS+LABA Combination Products for Asthma and COPD

The Ontario Drug Policy Research Network (ODPRN) conducted multiple studies on the efficacy, safety, and accessibility of ICS+LABA combination products for asthma and COPD using multiple research methods.

About

Asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are common diseases in Ontario. They result in considerable costs to the Ontario Public Drug Programs (OPDP) and are a large burden to the healthcare system.

12% OF ONTARIANS 35 YEARS OR OLDER ARE DIAGNOSED WITH COPD

13% OF ALL ONTARIANS ARE DIAGNOSED WITH ASTHMA



Inhaled corticosteroid and long-acting beta-agonist (ICS+LABA) combination products are respiratory inhalers used for the treatment of asthma and COPD. **ICS+LABA products are effective for asthma and COPD management.**

There are four different ICS+LABA products:

ZENHALE
indicated for asthma

ADVAIR
indicated for asthma and COPD

SYMBICORT
indicated for asthma and COPD

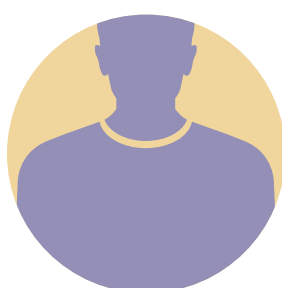
BREO ELLIPTA
indicated for COPD

As a class, all ICS+LABA products increased risk of pneumonia in COPD.

It is difficult to start patients, and keep them on, ICS+LABA.



Physicians may find it difficult to determine when to initiate a patient on ICS+LABA for COPD management, as diagnosis and assessing disease severity is complex.

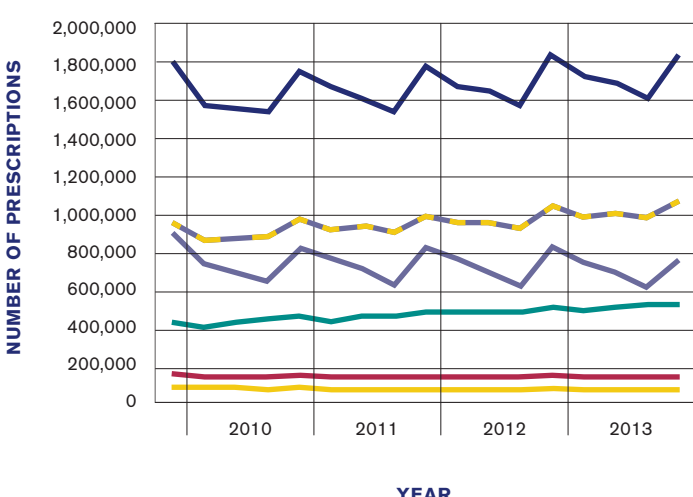


Patients are mostly compliant with ICS+LABA use for asthma, but those who aren't may stop taking the drugs due to high costs, fear of steroids, and their perception of disease severity.

ICS+LABA is frequently prescribed

The use of ICS+LABA combination products has **increased approximately 13%** over the past 4 years.

Total number of prescriptions for inhaled anti-inflammatory and bronchodilator agents dispensed in Canada, by quarter



ICS+LABA accounts for almost a quarter of all inhaled respiratory medications in Canada and is the second most prescribed in its drug class.

- SABA** Short-acting beta-agonist
- ICS+LABA COMBO** Combination
- ICS** Inhaled corticosteroid
- LAMA** Long Acting Muscarinic Antagonists
- SAMA** Short Acting Muscarinic Antagonists
- LABA** Long-acting beta-agonist



Asthma therapy expenditure by the OPDP totalled

\$112.6 million

between April 2012 and March 2013.

\$72.5 million (64%)

of this expenditure was on ICS+LABA products



COPD therapy expenditure by the OPDP totalled

\$149 million

between April 2012 and March 2013

\$85.5 million (57%)

of this expenditure was on ICS+LABA products

Note: These are not mutually exclusive as some patients may have a diagnosis of both asthma and COPD.



Guidelines recommend using ICS+LABA products for patients with asthma and patients with COPD.



Physician prescribing aligns with guidelines, where physicians prescribe ICS+ LABA products to patients with COPD and patients with asthma.



But the coverage of ICS+LABA products obtained through Ontario's public drug program is limited to patients with asthma only, leaving patients with COPD without public coverage for these drugs.

What Do We Recommend?

We recommend listing all ICS+LABA products as Limited Use for asthma and COPD.

The projected impact of expanding the Limited Use listing to patients with COPD is minimal, as physicians currently use the LU code for asthma to access these drugs for patients with COPD.