Optimal Selection of Cost-Effective Inhalers for Stable COPD
Initial Therapy

Exacerbation History

- ≥2 or ≥1 leading to hospital admission
- 0 or 1 (not leading to hospital admission)

Group A
- Occasional symptoms
  - Albuterol or Ipratropium
- Persistent symptoms
  - Tiotropium (Spiriva®)

Group B
- Tiotropium (Spiriva®)

Group C
- Tiotropium (Spiriva®)

Group D
- Tiotropium (Spiriva®)
- Severe symptoms use Tiotropium/Olodaterol (Stiolto®)

More Symptoms

- mMRC 0 – 1
- OR
- CAT <10

Symptoms

- mMRC ≥2
- OR
- CAT ≥10

Ensure Patient Adherence Before Changing Therapy

- Provide instructions and demonstrate proper technique when prescribing an inhaler device.
- Spacers improve drug delivery when used with metered-dose inhalers (MDI).
- Inhaler technique and adherence to therapy should be assessed before considering dose adjustments and/or changing therapy. (Links to VA Instructional Videos for using inhalers in the Veteran Health Library (https://www.veteranshealthlibrary.va.gov/): Combivent Respimat, Pressurized Metered-Dose Inhaler, HandiHaler, Mometasone Twisthaler, How to Use a Nebulizer).
If the Veteran is using the inhaler properly but continues to have symptoms or exacerbations:

- **Tiotropium (Spiriva®)**
  - LAMA
- **Tiotropium/Olodaterol (Stiolto®)**
  - LAMA + LABA
- **Tiotropium/Olodaterol (Stiolto®)** + Mometasone (Asmanex HFA®)
  - LAMA + LABA + ICS*

*Could also consider for LAMA + LABA + ICS: Tiotropium (Spiriva®) and Formoterol/Budesonide (Symbicort®).

**Did You Know**

Using a combination inhaler improves patient adherence and is more cost-effective than using two separate inhalers.

**What if the Patient is Not on a Recommended Regimen?**

Considerations for optimizing existing inhaler regimens for patients with COPD

1. **Patient with stable COPD and no asthma taking LABA/ICS**
   - **Consider taper off ICS**
   - **Start LAMA/LABA combination inhaler, first-line is Tiotropium/Olodaterol (Stiolto®)**

2. **Patient with stable COPD and no asthma taking LAMA + LABA + ICS and no exacerbations >12 months**
   - **Consider taper off ICS**
   - **Continue LAMA + LABA combination inhaler, first-line is Tiotropium/Olodaterol (Stiolto®)**

3. **Patient with stable COPD, no asthma, taking separate inhalers of LAMA and LABA**
   - **Consider switching to a combination product**
   - **Combination LAMA/LABA first-line is Tiotropium/Olodaterol (Stiolto®)**

4. **Patient with stable COPD and has asthma and taking non-formulary LABA/ICS inhaler**
   - **Consider switching to formulary LABA/ICS inhaler**
   - **Use Formoterol/Budesonide (Symbicort®) first-line and Salmeterol/Fluticasone (Wilexa® or Advair®) second-line**

**When to Switch to a Different Drug in the Same Class vs Switching to a Different Class?**

- **Difficulty using the inhaler device despite adequate training/education**
  - **Switch to a drug in the same class with a different device**

- **Adverse effect from an inhaler and using it correctly**
  - **Switch to a different drug class. Other drugs in the same class have similar adverse effects**

---

This factsheet was created to be used as a tool for VA providers and is available to use from the VA PBM Academic Detailing Service SharePoint Site: https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/vhaacademicdetailing/