## Appendix 1. MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC ADULT ASTHMA

**Confirmed Diagnosis**
Assess environment
Educate patient:
- environmental/trigger avoidance
- asthma control/warning signs
- occupational adjustment

Assess asthma severity

*** Recommended Daily Medication based on asthma severity (see Appendix 2)**

*Very Mild Intermittent Asthma*
- none

*Mild Asthma*
- low-dose inhaled corticosteroids (ICS)

*Moderate Asthma*
- low-to-medium dose ICS + long-acting $ß_2$-agonist (preferred) **OR** medium dose ICS **OR** low-to-medium dose ICS + leukotriene receptor antagonist (LTRA) or theophylline

*Severe Asthma*
- high-dose ICS + long-acting $ß_2$-agonist + additional therapy (such as long-acting theophylline)

Note: ICS's are the foundation of effective treatment.

**Pharmacologic Therapy**
- Start recommended daily medication*
- Use short-acting reliever medication only when needed

Note: Aim is to gain control ASAP.

**Educate patient**
- inhaler technique
- preventer/reliever medication,
- concerns/barriers to medication
- written action plan

**Follow Up in 1-2 weeks**

**Review Control**

| Indicator | Indicators of Acceptable Control |
|---|---|
| Reliever use & why | (<4doses/week) |
| Asthma symptoms | daytime (<4 days/week) & nighttime (<1 night/week) |
| Missed school/work | None |
| Physical activity | Normal/no limitations |
| Peak flow | >85% of personal best or < 15% diurnal variation |
| Attend ER or walk-in clinic | No |

**Controlled**

**Regular Follow Up**
- Review control
- Review medication doses
- Step down medication/ICS dose after good control x 3 months

**Not Controlled**

**Review**
- Inhaler technique
- Barriers to compliance
- Triggers
- Other drugs (e.g., beta blockers)
- Other aggravating diseases
- Consider alternate diagnosis

**Controlled**

**Not Controlled**

**Additional Therapy***
- Long-acting $ß_2$-agonist
- LTRA or theophylline

**Follow-up in 1-2 weeks**

**Controlled**

**Not Controlled**

**Specialist referral**

ICS: Inhaled corticosteroid
LTRA: leukotriene receptor antagonist

Adapted from: Adult Asthma Treatment Flow Chart. Canadian Asthma Consensus Group, Accessed September 2005. Canadian Asthma Consensus Guidelines. www.asthmaguidelines.com . 2003.

**© The Foundation for Medical Practice Education, www.fmpe.org**

November 2005