EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ASTHMA CARE PATHWAY ADULT: 16 years and over

Indications: Age 16 years or older with one of the following: history of asthma; or previous episode of wheezing requiring treatment; or asthma and pregnancy; or COPD with asthma

Contraindications: COPD without asthma; or CHF; or ED visit for prescription refill only

Introduction

1. This is a proactive tool that provides considerations for asthma management based on Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians' (CAEP) Asthma Guidelines (1996), the 2017 Asthma Management Continuum Children (6 years and over), Adolescents and Adults and other evidence from subsequent publications.
2. This pathway should be attached to the hospital's standard triage form once inclusion criteria are met.

ED Adult Asthma - Quality Assurance Guidelines:

CTAS Level 3: Nurse Assessment: less than 30 minutes; 1st Bronchodilator: less than 30 minutes; MD Assessment: less than 30 minutes

CTAS Level 2: Nurse Assessment: immediate; 1st Bronchodilator: less than 10 minutes; MD Assessment: less than 15 minutes

CTAS Level 1: Nurse Assessment: immediate; 1st Bronchodilator: immediate; MD Assessment: immediate

*Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) "Times to Assessment" are operating objectives, not standards of care. Facilities without on-site physician coverage may meet assessment objectives using delegated protocols and remote communication.

Disclaimer:
This Clinical Pathway is not intended to set the standard of care applicable in any particular clinical situation. It is merely prepared as a guide to assist physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and other healthcare providers, in deciding on the appropriate care required for a particular patient. At all times, physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and other healthcare providers must exercise their independent clinical judgment, based on their knowledge, training and experience, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances of each patient, when deciding on the appropriate course of investigation and/or treatment to recommend in a particular clinical situation. Any reference throughout the document to specific pharmaceutical products as examples does not imply endorsement of any of these products.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Triage** to determine patient eligibility for clinical pathway.
2. **Nurse/RT** to begin Adult ED Asthma Care Pathway Medical Directive **OR** **Physician** to choose order set according to asthma severity (page 1 or 2 of "Physician's Orders")
3. Refer to medication guidelines on reverse of physician orders for more information.
4. **Physician/Nurse Practitioner** to fill out and sign "Discharge Instructions"
5. **Physician/Nurse/RT** to review "Education Checklist" and "Discharge Instructions" with patient

This care pathway was developed with input from and has been endorsed by:

Respiratory Therapy Society of Ontario / Société de la Thérapie Respiratoire de l'Ontario
Société canadienne de thoracologie / Canadian Thoracic Society
RNAO Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario / l'Association des infirmières et infirmiers autorisés de l'Ontario
Ontario College of Family Physicians — Education | Leadership | Research | Advocacy — A Chapter of the College of Family Physicians of Canada
Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists / Société canadienne des pharmaciens d'hôpitaux — Ontario Branch/Section de l'Ontario
CAEP Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians
FPAGC Family Physician Airways Group of Canada
ENAO Emergency Nurses Association of Ontario
Ontario Pharmacists Association
BREATHE the lung association