

## Quick reference guide

# Omalizumab for severe persistent allergic asthma

### Guidance

- 1 Omalizumab is recommended, within its licensed indication, as an option for the treatment of severe persistent allergic (IgE mediated) asthma as add-on therapy to optimised standard therapy, only in adults and adolescents (12 years and older) who have been identified as having severe unstable disease.
- 2 For the purposes of this guidance, optimised standard therapy is defined as a full trial of, and documented compliance with, inhaled high-dose corticosteroids and long-acting beta-2 agonists in addition to leukotriene receptor antagonists, theophyllines, oral corticosteroids and beta-2 agonist tablets and smoking cessation where clinically appropriate.
- 3 Omalizumab add-on therapy should only be initiated if the patient fulfils the following criteria of severe unstable allergic asthma.
  - Confirmation of IgE mediated allergy to a perennial allergen by clinical history and allergy skin testing.
  - Either two or more severe exacerbations of asthma requiring hospital admission within the previous year, or three or more severe exacerbations of asthma within the previous year, at least one of which required admission to hospital, and a further two which required treatment or monitoring in excess of the patient's usual regimen, in an accident and emergency unit.
- 4 Omalizumab add-on therapy should be initiated and monitored by a physician experienced in both allergy and respiratory medicine in a specialist centre.
- 5 Omalizumab add-on therapy should be discontinued at 16 weeks in patients who have not shown an adequate response to therapy. Response to treatment should be defined on the basis of a full clinical assessment comprising: degree of asthma control, quality of life, control of exacerbations, avoidance of unscheduled healthcare utilisation; spirometry and peak expiratory flow measures and a global evaluation of treatment effectiveness, as assessed by the physician.

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This guidance represents the view of the Institute, which was arrived at after careful consideration of the available evidence. Healthcare professionals are expected to take it fully into account when exercising their clinical judgement. This guidance does not, however, override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer.

NICE technology appraisal guidance is about the use of new and existing medicines and treatments in the NHS in England and Wales.

## Implementation tools

NICE has developed tools to help organisations implement this guidance (listed below). These are available on our website ([www.nice.org.uk/TA133](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA133)).

- Costing report and costing template to estimate the savings and costs associated with implementation.
- Audit criteria to monitor local practice.

## Further information

### Ordering information

You can download the following documents from [www.nice.org.uk/TA133](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA133)

- A quick reference guide (this document) – a summary of recommendations for healthcare professionals.
- 'Understanding NICE guidance' – information for patients and carers.
- The full guidance.
- Details of all the evidence that was looked at and other background information.

For printed copies of the quick reference guide or 'Understanding NICE guidance', phone the NHS Response Line on 0870 1555 455 and quote:

- N1404 (quick reference guide)
- N1405 ('Understanding NICE guidance').

## Related NICE guidance

For information about NICE guidance that has been issued or is in development, see the website ([www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk))

### Published

- Inhaled corticosteroids for the treatment of chronic asthma in children under the age of 12 years. NICE technology appraisal guidance 131 (2007). Available from: [www.nice.org.uk/TA131](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA131).
- Inhaler devices for routine treatment of chronic asthma in older children (aged 5–15 years). NICE technology appraisal guidance 38 (2002). Available from: [www.nice.org.uk/TA038](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA038)
- Guidance on the use of inhaler systems (devices) in children under the age of 5 years with chronic asthma. NICE technology appraisal guidance 10 (2000). Available from: [www.nice.org.uk/TA010](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA010)

### Under development

- Inhaled corticosteroids for the treatment of chronic asthma in adults and children aged 12 years and over. NICE technology appraisal guidance (publication date to be confirmed).

## Updating the appraisal

This technology appraisal will be considered for review in August 2010. Information about the progress of a review will be posted on the NICE website ([www.nice.org.uk/TA133](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA133))

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