

What's new in Respiratory (2020)

Some of the new information and major changes included in the Respiratory guidelines in eTG complete.

The Respiratory guidelines have been extensively revised for this edition. They focus on the diagnosis of common respiratory conditions and individualised, patient-centred therapy to optimise the treatment of these conditions.

The topic **Asthma diagnosis in children 6 years and older, adolescents and adults** includes a flowchart to assist with diagnosis, and detailed information about lung function testing and treatment trials. Asthma cannot formally be diagnosed or excluded in children until spirometry can be performed; the new topic **Assessment of wheeze and asthma in children 1 to 5 years** provides guidance on assessing the likelihood of a young child having asthma.

The approach to **Maintenance management of asthma in adults and adolescents** continues to evolve, and new advice has been added about as-required inhaled corticosteroid+long-acting beta₂ agonist (ICS+LABA) therapy, and add-on treatments such as long-acting muscarinic antagonists (LAMAs). **Maintenance management of asthma in children** is not 'one size fits all', so the topic has been divided into two subtopics: children aged 1 to 5 years and children aged 6 years and older.

The topic **Allergic rhinitis** includes a new flowchart that summarises the approach to management. A patient handout has been added to step patients through correct use of nasal sprays to optimise benefit.

New tables detailing available inhaled drug formulations have been added to the topics **Maintenance management of asthma in adults and adolescents**, **Stable chronic obstructive pulmonary disease** and **Allergic rhinitis**.

The new topic **Thunderstorm asthma** provides advice on identifying people at risk of thunderstorm asthma and starting preventative management.

Cough is one of the most common reasons for presenting to healthcare providers—advice is provided on initial investigations, alarm symptoms, differential diagnoses, and definitions of cough categories for adults and children. Management advice includes an assessment of the evidence for cough clinics, and nondrug and drug interventions (including over-the-counter medications).

The topics **Acute bronchiolitis** and **Croup** provide advice on severity assessment and risk factors for severe disease. Management of acute bronchiolitis is summarised in a quick reference table. Dosing recommendations for drug treatment of croup have been updated, along with a new section on nondrug treatment of croup.

Bronchiectasis is an important cause of chronic cough and recurrent chest infections. Bronchial dilation in bronchiectasis is potentially reversible in children with early diagnosis and intervention; a new box of referral indications is included. Stable bronchiectasis in adults can be managed in primary care—key components of management are outlined (eg airway clearance, exercise, pulmonary rehabilitation, written action plans).

Obstructive sleep apnoea is the most common form of sleep-disordered breathing in adults. A new box simplifies which adults should have a sleep study, and whether it should be home-based or in-laboratory, and outlines the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) subsidy criteria. For **obstructive sleep apnoea in children**, a new screening tool to facilitate diagnosis is included. Although specialist referral is usually required, recommendations are given for therapies that can be trialled while awaiting referral.

Although oxygen therapy can be lifesaving, there is potential for harms (including fatal hypercapnia). Principles of **acute oxygen therapy** and target oxygen saturation levels are discussed. **Domiciliary oxygen therapy** is usually prescribed by specialists; this topic provides information on indications, assessment and monitoring.

Noninvasive ventilation is used for both acute and long-term indications; a table of common indications is included.

Periprocedural management of patients with respiratory disease requires clinical judgement. Updated guidance is provided on patient and procedural risk factors, and clinical assessment before a procedure (including pulmonary function testing, smoking cessation advice, drug therapy, and functional status assessment).

Pulmonary function testing and thoracic imaging are useful for diagnosing and monitoring respiratory conditions. New information is included on contraindications in spirometry, limitations of pulse oximetry, and risks of investigations (eg radiation exposure, iodinated contrast media), and a new table summarises indications for different types of CT chest.

This guideline also includes topics on specialist areas. The general principles of managing **cystic fibrosis** are discussed. **Pleural diseases** are covered in a series of topics on pleuritic chest pain, pneumothorax, pleural effusion and malignant pleural mesothelioma. An updated flow chart outlines management of primary spontaneous pneumothorax, based on new evidence supporting conservative management with analgesia, oxygen therapy and close observation. Information on major **interstitial lung diseases** is given in a series of topics, including a new topic on occupational interstitial lung diseases such as silicosis.

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