

# USA UPDATES NATIONAL ASTHMA GUIDELINES

**Subject:** USA UPDATES NATIONAL ASTHMA GUIDELINES

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**Message:**

## NATIONAL ASTHMA GUIDELINES UPDATED

New Approaches for Monitoring Asthma Control, Expanded Recommendations for Children

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) issued on 29 August 2007 the first comprehensive update in a decade of clinical guidelines for the diagnosis and management of asthma. The guidelines emphasize the importance of asthma control and introduce new approaches for monitoring asthma. Updated recommendations for managing asthma include an expanded section on childhood asthma with an additional age group, new guidance on medications, new recommendations on patient education in settings beyond the physician's office and new advice for controlling environmental factors that can cause asthma symptoms.

Coordinated by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health, NAEPP convenes an expert panel when there is sufficient science to warrant a rigorous, systematic review of the published medical literature to ensure that the asthma guidelines reflect the latest scientific advances.

Expert Panel Report 3 (EPR-3): Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma - Full Report, 2007<sup>1</sup> provides new guidance for selecting treatment based on a patient's individual needs and level of asthma control. The guidelines emphasize that while asthma can be controlled, the condition can change over time and differs among individuals and by age groups. Thus, it is important to monitor regularly the patient's level of asthma control so that treatment can be adjusted as needed.

EPR-3 builds upon comprehensive asthma guidelines issued in 1991 and 1997 and an update on selected topics released in 2002. The guidelines focus on four components of asthma care: measures to assess and monitor asthma, patient education, control of environmental factors and other conditions that can worsen asthma, and medications.

The stepwise asthma management charts are revised and expanded to specify treatment for three age groups: 0-4 years, 5-11 years, and 12 years and older. The 5-11 age group was added (earlier guidelines combined this group with adults) as a result of new evidence on medications for this age group and emerging evidence that suggests that children may respond differently than adults to asthma medications.

This NIH News Release is available online at:  
<http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/aug2007/nhlbi-29.htm>

Resources:  
Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma  
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/asthma/index.htm>

National Asthma Education and Prevention Program  
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/naepp/index.htm>

Asthma public education materials  
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/index.htm>

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