

Suspected asthma diagnosis and treatment pathway for Pre-School age children (under 5 years)

Based on NICE guidance March 2021

A simple summary of Somerset recommendations to aid decision making.

Consider a diagnosis of **Suspected asthma** in under 5s if *recurrent* wheezing, breathlessness or cough

NOTE: Symptoms vary over time and are not just wheezing with an URTI. Auscultation may reveal prolonged expiratory wheeze. High index of suspicion if history of eczema, rhinitis or atopy.

1st line treatment

SABA (short acting beta agonist) such as salbutamol as reliever of symptoms

NOTE: Use pressure meter dose inhaler with spacer only for symptomatic treatment. Suggest using low propellant inhaler such as Salamol or Airomir.

If asthma related symptoms:-

- **3 times a week or more;**
- **nighttime waking with cough; or**
- symptoms **not controlled by SABA** alone

consider an 8 week trial of paediatric low* dose ICS (inhaled corticosteroid)

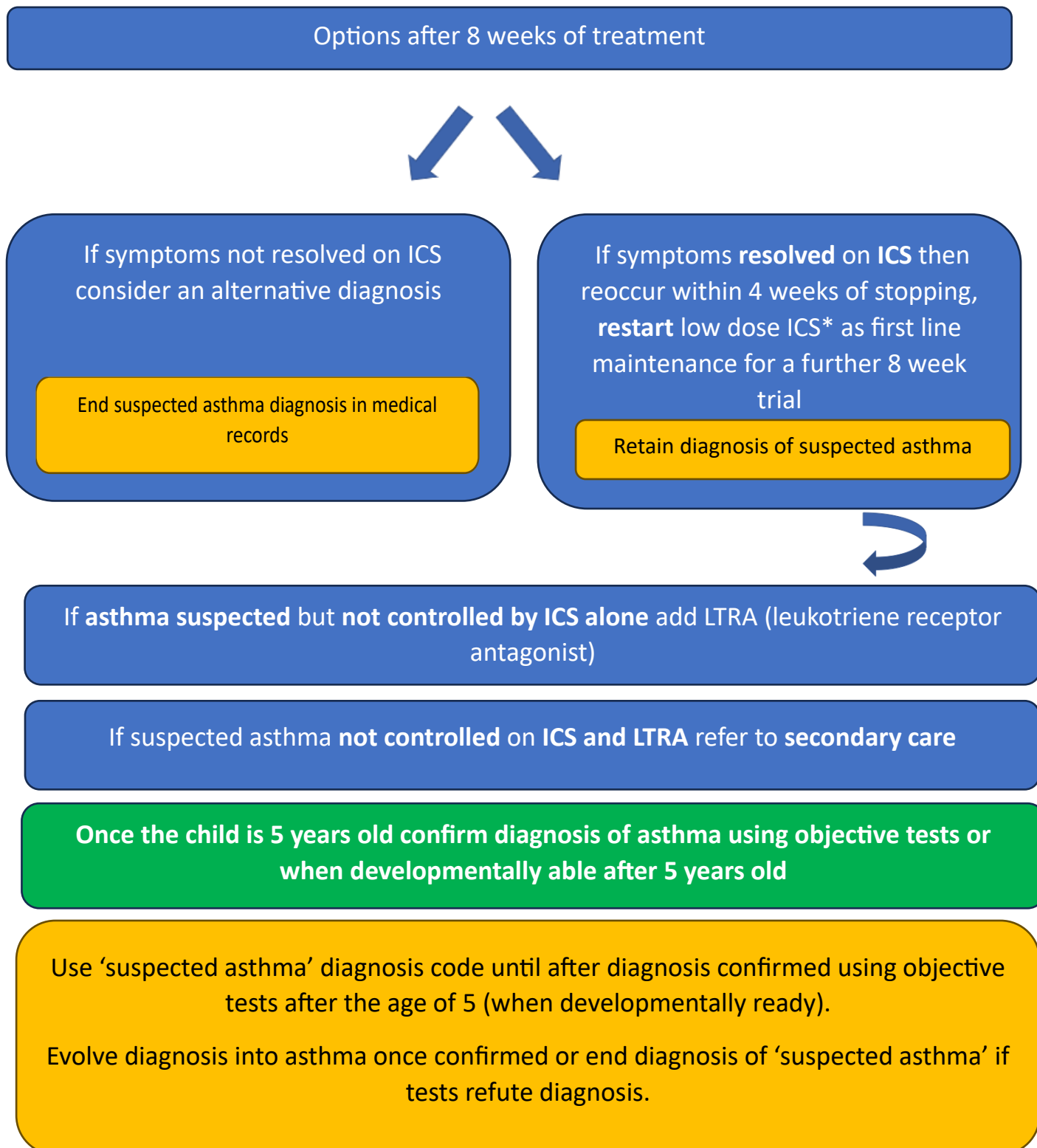
Code suspected asthma in medical records

NOTE: Use SABA alone if symptoms less than 3x per week and only need less than 2 SABA inhalers per year and do not code as asthma.

Assess effectiveness of treatment and stop after 8 weeks.

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*For low dose ICS Somerset recommends using Soprobe[®] 100mcg two puffs bd with a Volumatic[®] spacer. Medium dose only after referral to specialist care.

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Decision making tools, guidance and websites to support healthcare professionals caring for Children and Young people with suspected Asthma.

Tools



Personalised Asthma Action Plans – PAAP

PAAP can provide advice, education and action points for parents, older children, and carers on how to monitor and manage their asthma.

A PAAP should be completed /updated at each contact, ensuring parents and children have a firm plan on managing asthma.

[childrens-asthma-plan_may22_cc_editable.pdf \(shopify.com\)](https://www.shopify.com/products/childrens-asthma-plan-may22-cc-editable-pdf)

Guidance



Medical management of Chronic asthma in Primary Care, Source Beat Asthma.

<https://www.beatasthma.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/1-BTSSIGN-guidelines-summary-2021.pdf>



BTS/SIGN British Guidelines on the management of Asthma.

[Asthma | British Thoracic Society | Better lung health for all \(brit-thoracic.org.uk\)](https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk)



NICE Clinical Knowledge on Asthma Management, revised August 2023. To support and inform practice with direction to up to date and relevant information.

[Management | Asthma | CKS | NICE](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ckscs/asthma)

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Supportive Websites

Beat Asthma Resources tailored to the needs of Primary Care.

[Primary Healthcare Professionals - Beat Asthma](#)

The site supports-

- Asthma Diagnosis.
- Chronic Management
- Exacerbation Management
- Viral Wheeze
- How to use your devices information sheet.



E-Learning

E learning for health framework has been developed to allow individuals, employers, and integrated care systems to be aware of the skills and knowledge that are required to ensure they can safely care for a child and young person with asthma.

The framework divides different roles into 5 'tiers'. A tier describes the level of care a person may be expected to deliver to a child or young person with asthma. The more involved the care, the higher the level of tier.

[Asthma \(Children and young people\) - elearning for healthcare \(elfh.org.uk\)](#)



NHS Somerset Website

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/prescribing-and-medicines-management/prescribing-guidelines-by-clinical-area/respiratory/#young-people>

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Suggested spacers to use with children based on age. Prescribers are free to use whichever spacer they are most comfortable with.

Age	Device	Compatible Inhalers	Alternatives
0-2 years	Volumatic + Mask- Tilted or vertical 10 second tidal breath technique	Salbutamol (Ventolin®) Clenil Molulite Fluticasone	Orange EasyChamber with Mask Orange AeroChamber with Mask
2-3 years	Volumatic + mask 5 tidal breath technique	Salbutamol (Ventolin®) Clenil Molulite Fluticasone	Yellow EasyChamber with Mask Yellow AeroChamber with Mask
3-10 years	Volumatic with mouthpiece 5 tidal breath technique	Salbutamol (Ventolin®) Clenil Molulite Fluticasone Seretide	Blue EasyChamber with mouthpiece Green AeroChamber with mouthpiece
10 years +	Volumatic with mouthpiece Single breath-breathhold technique	Salbutamol (Ventolin®) Clenil Molulite Fluticasone Seretide	Blue EasyChamber with mouthpiece Blue AeroChamber with mouthpiece Dry powder devices: Accuhaler Turbohaler

