

Maintenance and Reliever Therapy (MART) Norfolk and Waveney Guidance

What is MART?

- A **single inhaler** containing both an **inhaled corticosteroid (ICS)**, to reduce inflammation, and a **fast, but long acting beta₂ agonist (LABA)**, i.e., **formoterol**, as the bronchodilator.
- Used for **both daily maintenance therapy AND the relief of symptoms as required (PRN)**
- **Formoterol replaces** the 'blue' short acting beta₂ agonist (SABA). It works as fast as salbutamol to relieve symptoms.
- **A MART inhaler regimen delivers a dose of ICS at the same time as the reliever (formoterol)** when used to treat symptoms. This reduces inflammation (increased eosinophils) caused by triggers, reduces symptoms, improves asthma control, **and reduces the risk of an asthma attack.**
- A **MART regimen also reduces the risk of SABA overuse** for asthma. *'Regular use of SABA, even for 1-2 weeks, is associated with increased airway hyperresponsiveness, reduced bronchodilator effect, increased allergic response, increased eosinophils (e.g. Hancox, 2000; Aldridge, 2000)'. 'This can lead to a vicious cycle encouraging overuse'* [Gina 2022]
- **See overleaf for ICS / LABA inhalers which are licensed for MART** and formulary status.

Which patients can be offered MART? See [Norfolk and Waveney Primary Care Asthma Resources](#)

- **MART can be offered** to treat asthma as per [NICE NG245 Asthma](#)
 - **The patient must be able to understand and adhere to a MART regimen.**
 - Patients age ≥ 12 years: *can be initiated in primary care by a clinician with respiratory expertise**
 - **Patients age < 12 years (check product licence): by, or on the advice of, a respiratory specialist**
- *Primary Care Respiratory Society : Fit to Care** This could include *experienced* primary care clinicians

Advice to patients [MART top tips \(PCRS\)](#), [NHS videos](#) to support patient discussions

- ALL patients should have a **Personalised Asthma Action Plan (PAAP) which includes specific MART regimen advice.** [MART action plans \(PCRS\)](#) [MART action plan \(Asthma + Lung UK\)](#)
- **The action plan should clearly explain.**
 - The number of doses to take as the **regular maintenance dose.**
 - **What to do**, how many doses and other actions to take, **if symptoms occur**
 - **What to do** in the event of an '**asthma attack**'.
- **The need to book a review if regularly using extra doses of the MART inhaler.**
- Patients should 'rinse and spit' after regular maintenance doses, but this is not required after 'PRN' doses *unless high risk for oral candidiasis* (Prof. Helen. K.Reddel MBBS, PhD GINA board of directors).
- Patients should ideally have two of their MART inhalers: **'keep one with you all the time, and one at home** for maintenance doses (e.g. next to toothbrush or bed)

What about SABAs?

- The use of a separate SABA is **not** required. *Formoterol replaces the need for a SABA.*
- **For patients who are unsure about moving to a MART regimen**, consider allowing them to keep one SABA 'blue' inhaler, *for reassurance only*, until their next review. *But remove it from their repeat. If they use their SABA, re-consider their suitability for a MART regimen.*



















Acute exacerbations and MART regimens, advice to give patients.

- Follow your **personalised MART action plan.**
- **If your symptoms do not improve after your maximum allowed 'extra doses' (usually 6 extra doses) you should call 999 / access emergency services urgently**
- If symptoms improve, you should still make an urgent appointment with your GP practice to review your asthma treatment, in addition to continuing your regular maintenance dose.

Inhalers *licensed*¹ for Maintenance and Reliever Therapy (MART)

Ideally use **In-check® Dial G16** (or similar / trainer device) to ensure the patient will be able to use the device.

Technique DPIs: quick and deep (2 – 3 sec) min 30l/min pMDIs: slow and steady (3 – 5 sec)

Inhaler Device <i>Click name for link to SPC dose information. All devices listed below have dose counters</i>	Image	Video QR Asthma + Lung UK	Age licence for MART	Cost per dose ²	Additional information
Norfolk and Waveney preferred formulary options – Dry Powder inhalers (DPIs) are 1st line lower carbon device. Pressurised metered dose inhalers (pMDIs) only for patients who are unable to use a DPI.					
DPI WockAIR® (160 / 4.5mcg) <i>Forspiro device</i> Budesonide / formoterol 120 doses			≥ 12yrs	£0.16	2 x 60 dose per 120 dose pack – <i>useful for extra devices</i> <i>Device video link</i>
DPI Fobumix Easyhaler® 80 & 160mcg/6mcg Budesonide / formoterol 120 doses			≥ 12yrs	£0.18	DPI but requires shaking before use. Carbon neutral <i>Device video link</i>
pMDI Proxor® 100 / 6mcg <i>Extrafine</i> beclometasone / formoterol 120 doses <i>Use with a spacer, see QR link</i>			≥ 18yrs	£0.08	<i>Device video link</i>
pMDI Bibecfo® 100 / 6mcg <i>Extrafine</i> beclometasone / formoterol 120 doses <i>Use with a spacer, see QR link</i>			≥ 18yrs	£0.12	<i>Device video link</i>
Alternative licensed options if the devices listed above are not appropriate / available					
DPI Fostair NEXThaler® 100 / 6mcg <i>Extrafine</i> beclometasone / formoterol 120 doses			≥ 18yrs	£0.24	Carbon neutral <i>Device video link</i>
DPI DuoResp Spiromax® 160mcg/4.5mcg Budesonide / formoterol 120 doses			≥ 12yrs	£0.23	<i>Device video link</i>
DPI Symbicort Turbohaler® 100 & 200mcg/6mcg Budesonide / formoterol 120 doses			100/6 ≥ 6yrs 200/6 ≥ 12yrs	£0.23	<i>Delivered doses = 80/4.5mcg & 160/4.5mcg</i> <i>Device video link</i>
pMDI Luforbec® 100 / 6mcg <i>Extrafine</i> beclometasone / formoterol 120 doses <i>Use with a spacer, see QR link</i>			≥ 18yrs	£0.12	Carbon neutral <i>Device video link</i> <i>Excipients different to similar brands.</i> <i>Smaller device</i>
pMDI Fostair® 100 / 6mcg <i>Extrafine</i> beclometasone / formoterol 120 doses <i>Use with a spacer, see QR link</i>			≥ 18yrs	£0.24	Carbon neutral <i>Device video link</i>

Prescribing tips:-

Read code: *single inhaler maintenance and reliever therapy started. Directions: include regular maintenance dose and extra doses if needed for symptoms as per MART action plan.*

Script note / patient text: *Refer to MART action plan as agreed with your asthma clinician.*

Repeat quantity: *adequate for maintenance dose but total maximum number of inhalers / issues per year should allow for the agreed appropriate number of extra inhaler(s) allowed per year for symptom relief. E.g. for SystmOne exceeding the maximum allowed issues would prompt repeat clerks to alert a designated respiratory clinician that a review may be required / patient contact to check asthma control.*

References: 1. List above **excludes** digital inhalers & inhalers with **very high** carbon footprint. Electronic Medicines Compendium (EMC) click [here](#) 2. dose = one dose / inhalation as per the specific device age licensed MART regimen, cost March 2026