

STEP THERAPY POLICY

- POLICY:** Pulmonary – Airsupra Step Therapy Policy
- Airsupra™ (albuterol and budesonide inhalation aerosol – AstraZeneca)

REVIEW DATE: 12/06/2023

OVERVIEW

Airsupra is a combination of albuterol, a short-acting beta₂-agonist (SABA), and budesonide, an inhaled corticosteroid (ICS).¹ It is indicated for the as-needed treatment or prevention of bronchoconstriction and to reduce the risk of exacerbations in patients ≥ 18 years of age with **asthma**. Airsupra is a metered-dose inhaler that utilizes a hydrofluoroalkane propellant.

Generic albuterol sulfate inhalation aerosol, albuterol sulfate inhalation aerosol (branded generics), levalbuterol tartrate inhalation aerosol (branded generics), ProAir Digihaler, ProAir HFA, ProAir RespiClick, Proventil HFA, Ventolin HFA, and Xopenex HFA are all SABA inhalers.²⁻⁷ They are indicated for relief of acute **asthma** symptoms and prevention of **exercise induced bronchospasm**. All of the short-acting beta₂-agonists inhalers are indicated in patients ≥ 4 years of age. The SABA inhalers are all metered-dose inhalers that utilize a hydrofluoroalkane propellant, with the exception of ProAir Digihaler and ProAir RespiClick, which are dry-powder inhalers.

Guidelines

The Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) [2023] provides a step-wise approach for asthma management utilizing controller and reliever therapies.⁹ In adult and adolescent patients, an as-needed low-dose ICS-formoterol combination is the preferred initial reliever agent. If the preferred regimen is not possible, an as-needed ICS/SABA (e.g., Airsupra) or as-needed SABA are recommended similarly as alternative reliever therapy options. However, if a SABA is chosen as the reliever therapy, the guidelines make additional recommendations regarding administering an ICS separately at the same time as the SABA. Guidelines note that if an ICS is being administered at the same time as a SABA, this may be accomplished using a combination inhaler or separate inhalers. Additionally, recommendations regarding use of other ICS or ICS/long-acting beta₂-agonist maintenance therapy based on patient's symptoms, age, and other factors.

POLICY STATEMENT

This program has been developed to encourage the use of a Step 1 Product prior to the use of a Step 2 Product. If the Step Therapy rule is not met for a Step 2 Product at the point of service, coverage will be determined by the Step Therapy criteria below. All approvals are provided for 1 year in duration.

Automation: A patient with a of one Step 1 Product within the 130-day look-back period is excluded from Step Therapy.

Step 1: generic albuterol sulfate inhalation aerosol, albuterol sulfate inhalation aerosol (branded generics), levalbuterol tartrate inhalation aerosol (branded generics), ProAir Digihaler, ProAir HFA, ProAir RespiClick, Proventil HFA, Ventolin HFA, Xopenex HFA

Step 2: Airsupra

CRITERIA

1. If the patient has tried one Step 1 Product, approve a Step 2 Product.
2. No other exceptions are recommended.

REFERENCES

1. Airsupra™ [prescribing information]. Wilmington, DE: AstraZeneca; January 2023.
2. Ventolin® HFA inhalation aerosol [prescribing information]. Research Triangle Park, NC: GlaxoSmithKline; August 2021.
3. Proventil® HFA inhalation aerosol [prescribing information]. Whitehouse Station, NJ: Merck; September 2017.
4. ProAir® RespiClick inhalation powder [prescribing information]. Horsham, PA: Teva; September 2020.
5. ProAir® HFA inhalation aerosol [prescribing information]. Horsham, PA: Teva; February 2019.
6. Xopenex HFA® inhalation aerosol [prescribing information]. Marlborough, MA: Sunovion; February 2017.
7. ProAir® Digihaler® inhalation powder [prescribing information]. Horsham, PA: Teva; September 2020.
8. Global Initiative for Asthma. Global strategy for asthma management and prevention: updated 2023. Available at: <http://www.ginasthma.org>. Accessed on December 4, 2023.