



# PHARMACY FACTS

Current information for pharmacists about  
the MassHealth Pharmacy Program

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## Flovent Update

Pharmacy Facts [#211](#) and [#216](#) informed pharmacies about recent MassHealth coverage updates related to brand Flovent and generic fluticasone propionate inhalation products. This Pharmacy Facts serves as a summary of previous changes and a reference to upcoming changes to the MassHealth Drug List. Pharmacists and prescribers may also use the clinical information and dosing table located in the appendix of this Pharmacy Facts as a resource to help select a comparable alternative inhaled corticosteroid, if needed.

## Background and MassHealth Management for Flovent® and Generic Fluticasone Propionate Inhalers

- GlaxoSmithKline announced that brand Flovent® HFA and Flovent® Diskus® are no longer available to order as of December 31, 2023. It is expected that supply of these products will be gone by early 2024. MassHealth will continue to pay for brand Flovent® (fluticasone propionate) until supplies are depleted.
- Since December 4, 2023, generic fluticasone propionate requires prior authorization (PA).
  - During the time period between December 4, 2023, and March 3, 2024, all members stable on Flovent® products may continue to get brand or generic fluticasone propionate without PA. Any new starts will require PA for generic fluticasone propionate inhalers (regardless of age).

- Beginning March 4, 2024:
  - Generic fluticasone propionate HFA inhalers will require PA for members ≥five years old.
  - MassHealth will not require PA for fluticasone propionate HFA inhalers for members <five years old.
  - Generic fluticasone propionate Diskus® will require PA for all ages.

## MassHealth Prior Authorization Status Effective March 4, 2024

Drugs that require PA
Alvesco® HFA (ciclesonide inhaler)
ArmonAir™ Digihaler® (fluticasone propionate)
Asmanex® Twishaler® (mometasone 110 mcg) ≥12 years old
Asmanex® Twishaler® (mometasone 220 mcg) <12 years old
Fluticasone propionate HFA ≥5 years old*
Fluticasone propionate DPI*
Pulmicort® Respules® (budesonide suspension) ≥13 years old*
QVAR® RediHaler™ (beclomethasone inhaler)

\*PA required for both brand and generic

Abbreviations: DPI=dry powder inhaler, HFA=hydrofluoroalkane (propellant used in MDI)

Drugs that do NOT require PA
Arnuity® Ellipta® (fluticasone furoate)
Asmanex® HFA (mometasone furoate)
Asmanex® Twishaler® (mometasone 110 mcg) <12 years old
Asmanex® Twishaler® (mometasone 220 mcg) ≥12 years old
Budesonide inhalation suspension <13 years old
<i>Brand name Pulmicort® requires PA</i>
Fluticasone propionate HFA <5 years old
Pulmicort® Flexhaler® (budesonide powder)

## Appendix: Clinical Resources

### Asthma Clinical Guidelines

#### Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) 2023 Updates:

Preferred Steps	Patients 12 years and older
Steps 1-2	As-needed low-dose inhaled corticosteroid (ICS)-formoterol
Step 3	Low-dose maintenance ICS-formoterol
Step 4	Medium-dose maintenance ICS-formoterol
Step 5	Add-on LAMA. Refer to phenotypic assessment ± biologic. Consider high-dose ICS-formoterol.

#### National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) 2020 Focused Updates:

Preferred Steps	Patients 12 years and older
Step 1	As-needed SABA
Step 2	Daily low-dose ICS and as-needed SABA or as-needed concomitant ICS and SABA
Step 3	Daily and as-needed combination low-dose ICS-formoterol†
Step 4	Daily and as-needed combination medium-dose ICS-formoterol†
Step 5	Daily medium/high-dose ICS-LABA + LAMA and as-needed SABA
Step 6	Daily high-dose ICS-LABA + OCS + as-needed SABA

*Abbreviations:* ICS=inhaled corticosteroid, LABA=long-acting beta<sub>2</sub>-agonist, LAMA=long-acting muscarinic antagonist, OCS=oral corticosteroid, SABA=short-acting beta<sub>2</sub>-agonist  
 †The use of ICS-formoterol is not approved for maintenance and rescue therapy or for as-needed rescue only in the United States. The recommendations for ICS-formoterol are based on clinical data evaluating the use of ICS-formoterol formulations and strengths not approved and not available in the United States.

### Additional Inhaled Corticosteroid (ICS) Information

- GINA recommends metered dose inhalers (MDI) with a spacer for children 0-5 years of age (with face mask for children 0-3 years)
- Direct comparison between doses has not been researched; however, doses of ICS are grouped in low, medium and high daily doses
- Switching between inhalers will require close follow up to observe the need for dose adjustments
- In general, HFA inhalers can be used with spacers (with the exception of QVAR Redihaler); DPI inhalers require breath actuations (sufficient respiratory force to inhale the powder).

## Inhaled Corticosteroid Dosing Table

Brand Name (generic name) Dosage Strength		Inhaler Strength (number of puffs and frequency) <i>adapted from American Lung Association</i>		
		Child 0-4 years	Child 5-11 years	≥12 years & Adults
<b>Alvesco®</b> (ciclesonide <b>HFA</b> ) 80, 160 mcg <i>*Off-label for children 4-11 years. Note: May be used with a spacer</i>	<b>Low dose</b>	80 mcg (one puff once daily)*	80 mcg (one puff once daily)*	80 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	160 mcg (one puff once daily)*	160 mcg (one puff once daily)*	160 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	160 mcg (two puffs twice daily)
<b>ArmonAir™ Digihaler</b> (fluticasone propionate <b>DPI</b> ) 55, 113, 232 mcg	<b>Low dose</b>	N/A	N/A	55 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	N/A	N/A	113 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	232 mcg (one puff twice daily)
<b>Arnuity® Ellipta®</b> (fluticasone furoate <b>DPI</b> ) 50, 100, 200 mcg	<b>Low dose</b>	N/A	50 mcg (one puff once daily)	100 mcg (one puff once daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	N/A	N/A	100 mcg (one puff once daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	200 mcg (one puff once daily)
<b>Asmanex® HFA</b> (mometasone furoate <b>HFA</b> ) 50, 100, 200 mcg <i>Note: May be used with a spacer</i>	<b>Low dose</b>	N/A	N/A	100 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	N/A	50 mcg (two puffs twice daily)	200 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	200 mcg (two puffs twice daily)
<b>Asmanex® Twisthaler®</b> (mometasone furoate <b>DPI</b> ) 110, 220 mcg	<b>Low dose</b>	N/A	110 mcg (one puff once daily)	110 mcg (one puff once daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	N/A	N/A	220 mcg (two puffs once daily or one puff twice daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	220 mcg (two puffs twice daily)
<b>Flovent® Diskus®</b> (fluticasone propionate <b>DPI</b> ) 50, 100, 250 mcg	<b>Low dose</b>	N/A	50 mcg, 100 mcg (one puff twice daily)	100 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	N/A	N/A	100 mcg (two puffs twice daily) or 250 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	250 mcg (two puffs twice daily)
<b>Flovent® HFA</b> (fluticasone propionate <b>HFA</b> ) 44, 110, 220 mcg <i>*Off-label for children 1-3 years with spacer device with mask</i>	<b>Low dose</b>	44 mcg (two puffs twice daily)*	44 mcg (two puffs twice daily)	44 mcg (two puffs twice daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	N/A	N/A	110 mcg or 220 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	220 mcg (two to four puffs twice daily)
<b>Pulmicort® Flexhaler®</b> (budesonide <b>DPI</b> ) 90, 180 mcg <i>*Max dose: 6-17 years, 360 mcg twice daily; ≥18 years, 720 mcg twice daily.</i>	<b>Low dose</b>	N/A	90 mcg, 180 mcg (one puff twice daily)*	90 mcg, 180 mcg (one puff twice daily)*
	<b>Medium dose</b>	N/A	180 mcg (two puffs twice daily)*	180 mcg (two puffs twice daily)*
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	180 mcg (four puffs twice daily)*
<b>Pulmicort Respules®</b> (budesonide inhalation suspension) <i>*Approved for children 12 months to 8 years</i> 0.25 mg, 0.5 mg, 1 mg (per 2 mL)	<b>Low dose</b>	0.25 mg once daily*	0.25 mg once daily*	N/A
	<b>Medium dose</b>	0.25 mg twice daily*	0.25 mg twice daily*	N/A
	<b>High dose</b>	0.5 mg twice daily*	0.5 mg twice daily*	N/A
<b>QVAR® Redihaler™</b> (beclomethasone <b>HFA</b> ) 40, 80 mcg <i>*Approved in children 4 to 11 years Note: <b>Cannot</b> be used with a spacer</i>	<b>Low dose</b>	40 mcg (one puff twice daily)*	40 mcg (one puff twice daily)	40 mcg, 80 mcg (one puff twice daily)
	<b>Medium dose</b>	80 mcg (one puff twice daily)*	80 mcg (one puff twice daily)	80 mcg (two to three puffs twice daily)
	<b>High dose</b>	N/A	N/A	80 mcg (four puffs twice daily)