

Study: Web-Based Program Might Improve Asthma Care

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Patients who used a daily web-based asthma monitoring and medication intake program developed long-term control of severe asthma symptoms and needed a lower dosage of prednisone (an oral steroid), according to a news release from the [American Thoracic Society](#).

Corticosteroids treatment is used to treat inflammation caused by different diseases such as asthma, allergies, skin problems and arthritis.

For the study, researchers monitored 89 patients with severe asthma for six months. Patients were divided into two groups: a standardized care group and an Internet-supported daily monitoring group.

The patients who logged online visited a web site for about five minutes a day to register their symptoms, lung function, FENO (exhaled nitric oxide) levels and daily corticosteroid dosage. A specialized asthma nurse evaluated the entries and adjusted patients' weekly corticosteroid dosage.

After six months, researchers found that Internet-support patients took lower dosages of oral corticosteroids compared with the standard care treatment group.

"We know that in patients with prednisone-dependent asthma it is important to adjust the daily dose of oral corticosteroids to the lowest possible level in order to reduce long-term side effects," said Simone Hashimoto, MD, a research fellow from the department of respiratory medicine of the University of Amsterdam.

"Our findings suggest that this novel Internet-based strategy can and should be applied in all patients with severe prednisone-dependent asthma to reduce total corticosteroid consumption," Hashimoto added.

The research team will report its findings at the upcoming American Thoracic Society Conference in New Orleans.

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