

FDA issues warning on 4 widely-used asthma drugs

February 18 2010, By LAURAN NEERGAARD , AP Medical Writer

(AP) -- The government is issuing new restrictions on some widely used long-acting asthma drugs, saying they should never be used without other asthma controllers to prevent a lifethreatening risk.

Four medications - Foradil, Serevent, Advair and Symbicort - contain an ingredient that relaxes muscles in the lung's airways. While they're very helpful for some patients, the way they work also may mask symptoms that can trigger serious [asthma](#) attacks. It's a particular concern for children.

The [Food and Drug Administration](#) ordered new labels saying the drugs should be used for the shortest possible duration - and only together with other medications such as inhaled steroids that work differently, by relieving airway inflammation.

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