

Many parents know too little about their child's asthma meds

June 1 2016



(HealthDay)—Only half of parents of children with asthma fully

understand the use of their child's asthma medications, according to research published online May 17 in the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*.

Ann Chen Wu, M.D., M.P.H., of the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute in Boston, and colleagues conducted a survey of the parents of 740 [children](#) with probable persistent asthma. Parents were asked which asthma controller medications their child was prescribed and how often they should be taken. Responses were compared to instructions from their child's [health care](#) provider.

Records showed that 77 percent of the children were prescribed inhaled corticosteroids, 22 percent were prescribed leukotriene antagonists, and one in 10 were prescribed inhaled corticosteroids and long-acting beta agonists. But deviations from the doctor's directions were common. For instance, 29 percent of children prescribed inhaled corticosteroids weren't taking them as directed. Among 202 children who were to use the inhaled corticosteroids every day of the year, 27 percent of parents said otherwise. Among the 263 children who were to use [inhaled corticosteroids](#) daily when asthma is active, more than half of parents (54 percent) said they weren't compliant.

"Of course, we need to improve provider-patient communication in the medical office, especially for controller medications for children with asthma, but providers may be unaware of their patient's lack of adherence," Wu said in a journal news release. "A mismatch between parent and provider was more likely to happen if the parents felt that the medicine was not helping, or, conversely, if the parent believed their child did not need as much as prescribed." Mismatches were also more likely to occur among Hispanic parents, she and her colleagues said.

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