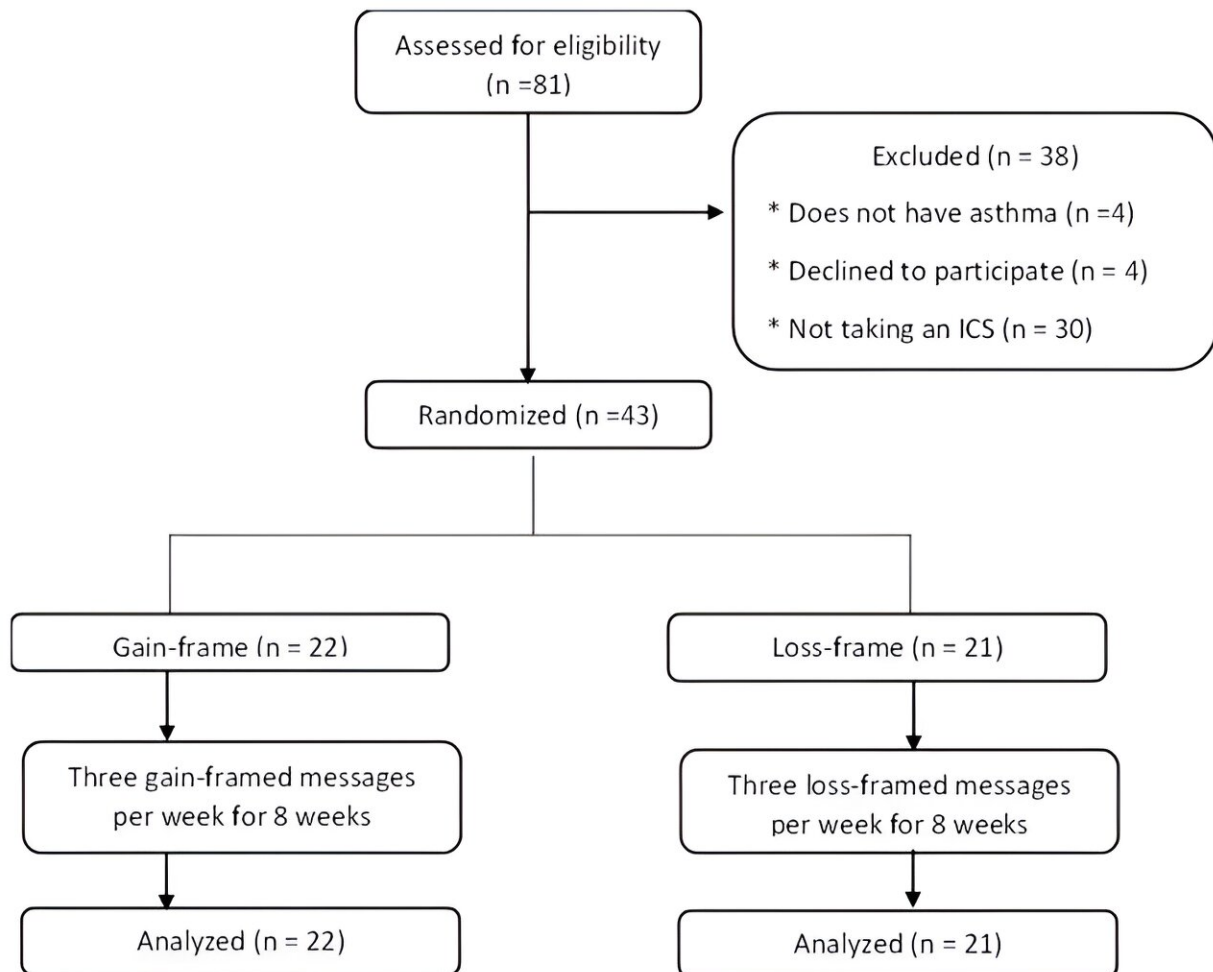


Improving asthma control in young adults

April 16 2024, by Marilyn Perkins



CONSORT flow diagram. Credit: *Pharmacy* (2024). DOI: 10.3390/pharmacy12010010

Here's a surprising statistic: Nearly 50% of people with asthma do not

take their medications as prescribed. That means they risk a flare-up of symptoms or a visit to the emergency room. Asthma researchers have studied medication adherence in children and adults to improve patient education, but rarely the population that bridges those groups: young adults.

"According to past studies, young adults are no longer adolescents but don't think of themselves as adults," says pharmacy researcher Ruth Jeminiwa, Ph.D.. Once they leave home, they are new to disease self-management. In addition, Dr. Jeminiwa says, "Research suggests that [young adults](#) are very optimistic and may underestimate the risk of medication non-adherence."

In a [study](#) published in *Pharmacy*, Dr. Jeminiwa and her collaborators studied a text-messaging intervention in [college students](#) between the ages of 18 and 29 with moderate to severe persistent asthma. Three times a week, the 43 participants received a text message that outlined the consequence of using or failing to use their daily inhaler. Messages were framed either positively or negatively. For example:

- Taking your daily inhaled medications as prescribed
DECREASES breathlessness.
- Failing to take your daily inhaled medications as prescribed
INCREASES breathlessness.

The participants responded to questionnaires before and after eight weeks of receiving these messages. The researchers found that participants' intentions to use their inhalers had improved, and their asthma was better controlled compared to baseline scores, regardless of whether the message was framed positively or negatively. Dr. Jeminiwa says, "This [text-message](#) intervention actually has the potential to improve asthma outcomes."

In addition, the intervention proved to be feasible and heeded—no participants dropped out of the study and they responded to 85% of the text messages.

There's more to learn, Dr. Jeminiwa says. She'd like to test her text-messaging intervention in a larger sample, and include a [control group](#) that doesn't receive texts.

More information: Ruth Jeminiwa et al, Effects of Framed Mobile Messages on Beliefs, Intentions, Adherence, and Asthma Control: A Randomized Trial, *Pharmacy* (2024). [DOI: 10.3390/pharmacy12010010](https://doi.org/10.3390/pharmacy12010010)

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