

Common asthma medication action and safety profiles: Pre-conception, all trimesters, labour and breastfeeding

Medication	Action	ERS/TSANZ Safety: Pre-conception, all trimesters, labour, breastfeeding	Australian pregnancy category†
SABAS - SHORT ACTING BRONCHODILATORS (RELIEVERS)*			
Salbutamol <i>Ventolin Inhaler, Asmol Inhaler, Airomir Autohaler, Zempreon Inhaler</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quickly relaxes tightened airway muscles which opens the airways up to make breathing easier 	Compatible	A
Terbutaline <i>Bricanyl Turbohaler</i>		Probably safe	A
ICS – INHALED CORTICOSTEROIDS (PREVENTERS)			
Budesonide#: <i>Pulmicort Turbuhaler</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces airway sensitivity, inflammation and swelling Reduces excess mucus 	Compatible	A
Beclometasone#: <i>QVAR Inhaler/Autohaler</i>			B3°
Fluticasone: <i>Arnuity Ellipta, Flixotide Accuhaler /Evohaler, Fluticasone Cipla Inhaler</i>			B3° fluticasone furoate, fluticasone propionate
Ciclesonide: <i>Alvesco Inhaler</i>		Probably safe	B3
ICS/LABA - INHALED CORTICOSTEROID + LONG ACTING BRONCHODILATORS (COMBINATION PREVENTER)			
Salmeterol + ICS: <i>Seretide Accuhaler /Inhaler; Fluticasone + Salmeterol Cipla Inhaler (fluticasone/salmeterol)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaxes tightened airway muscles for up to 12-24hrs 	Probably safe	B3 salmeterol°
Formoterol + ICS: <i>DuoResp Spiromax, Symbicort Turbohaler /Rapihaler, (budesonide/formoterol), Flutiform Inhaler (fluticasone/formoterol), Fostair Inhaler (beclomethasone/formoterol)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces airway sensitivity, inflammation and swelling Reduces excess mucus 		B3 formoterol
Vilanterol + ICS <i>Breo Ellipta (fluticasone/vilanterol)</i>			B3 fluticasone furoate/vilanterol trifrenatate
Indacaterol + mometasone (ICS) <i>Aectura Breezhaler (indacaterol/mometasone)</i>			B3 indacaterol, mometasone

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OCS - ORAL CORTICOSTEROIDS / SYSTEMIC CORTICOSTEROIDS			
Prednisolone Prednisone Hydrocortisone	• Reduces airway sensitivity, inflammation and swelling	Possibly safe	A A A
LEUKOTRIENE RECEPTOR ANTAGONISTS (NON-STEROIDAL PREVENTERS)			
Montelukast tablets	• Reduces narrowing and swelling of airways	Probably safe	B1
MONOCLONAL ANTIBODIES			
Benralizumab: <i>Fasenra</i> Dupilumab: <i>Dupixent</i> Mepolizumab: <i>Nucala</i> Omalizumab: <i>Xolair</i>	• Reduces inflammation in the airways	Possibly safe [^]	B1 B1 B1 B1
<p>* <i>Reliever medication (SABAs and LABAs) should always be used in combination with an inhaled corticosteroid.</i></p> <p># <i>Preferred medication in this class, as there is more safety data during pregnancy. However if a woman is already controlled with another medication in this class pre-pregnancy, it can be continued during pregnancy.</i></p> <p>[^] <i>Omalizumab probably safe - pre-conception and Trimesters 1-3, possibly safe in labour and breastfeeding</i></p> <p>[†] <i>Therapeutic Good Administration (TGA), Australia, Prescribing Medicines in Pregnancy Classification. For medications classified as 'Respiratory System / Inhalational agents' (except OCS, Endocrine system)</i></p> <p>Definitions of the Australian categories for prescribing medicines in pregnancy:</p> <p>A – “Drugs which have been taken by a large number of pregnant women and women of childbearing age without any proven increase in the frequency of malformations or other direct or indirect harmful effects on the fetus having been observed”</p> <p>B1 – “Drugs which have been taken by only a limited number of pregnant women and women of childbearing age, without an increase in the frequency of malformation or other direct or indirect harmful effects on the human fetus having been observed. Studies in animals have not shown evidence of an increased occurrence of fetal damage.”</p> <p>B3 – “Drugs which have been taken by only a limited number of pregnant women and women of childbearing age, without an increase in the frequency of malformation or other direct or indirect harmful effects on the human fetus having been observed. Studies in animals have shown evidence of an increased occurrence of fetal damage, the significance of which is considered uncertain in humans.”</p> <p>[°] <i>TGA Prescribing Medicines in Pregnancy Database safety statement: “The benefits of asthma control outweigh any potential for an adverse pregnancy outcome”.</i></p>			