

Definition of 'Severe Asthma'

Taken from Asthma uk web site 31/3/20 – follow this link:

<https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/triggers/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Shielding advice for very high-risk groups

The Government has [released guidelines](#) for people who would be at very high risk if they caught coronavirus because they have a severe respiratory condition, including severe asthma.

We are aware there has been some confusion about who should be shielding. We have been urgently clarifying this with Government and the NHS. We appreciate your patience, as identifying who is at high risk is a very challenging job that is having to be done at a fast pace.

If you or your child is in one of these groups, you should have already been identified and sent a letter or text message advising you to shield:

- You are taking ALL THREE OF:
 - a steroid preventer inhaler (at any dose)
 - another preventer medicine (e.g. you are on a combination inhaler, or take a medicine such as formoterol or salmeterol, or tiotropium as well as your steroid inhaler, or if you are taking montelukast)
 - regular or continuous oral steroids (which means you had 4 or more prescriptions for prednisolone between July and December 2019)
- Or you have been admitted to hospital in the last 12 months for your asthma
- Or you have ever been admitted to an intensive care unit for your asthma.

If you have not received a letter or text message yet, and you are in one of these groups, you should follow the shielding guidance anyway. Only contact your GP or hospital doctor if you need a letter, for example to prove this status to your employer. If you need to do this, you can do it now if you are in England, from Tuesday 31st March if you are in Scotland or Wales, or later in the week if you are in Northern Ireland. If you do not need this letter, then please just follow the shielding guidance, and there is no need to contact your doctor.

If you or your child is taking any of the below medicines:

You may not have received a letter advising you to shield yet, but we would advise you shield anyway.

This advice has been agreed in collaboration with the National Clinical Director for Respiratory at NHS England.

- Any [biologic therapy](#), also called a mAb (Xolair/omalizumab, Nucala/mepolizumab, Cinqaero/reslizumab, Fasenra/benralizumab)
- Antibiotic tablets or liquid for asthma every week as a preventer (e.g. azithromycin)
- A combination inhaler that also contains a long-acting bronchodilator (e.g. Seretide, Fostair, Symbicort) at a high daily steroid dose ([see the table below](#))
- An inhaler with a high daily steroid dose ([see the table below](#)) AND you are taking Montelukast