

**Table 3E. Asthma Treatment: Prevention of Mortality**

Referral Guideline	Rationale	Evidence Type
<p>Patients with potentially fatal asthma (prior severe, life threatening episode, intubation)</p>	<p><b>Improved pharmacologic therapy</b>            Inhaled steroids have been associated with significant reductions in risk for fatal and near-fatal exacerbation of asthma.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Allergy/Immunology physicians prescribe inhaled steroids more frequently than primary care physicians, and patients seen and managed by Allergy/Immunology physicians are more likely to be taking inhaled steroids regularly.<sup>2-6</sup></p> <p>Oral steroid use for attacks reduces the risk of fatal asthma.<sup>7-9</sup> Patients managed by A/I physicians are more likely to appropriately receive oral steroids.<sup>6, 10, 11</sup></p>	<p>Indirect outcome (inhaled and oral steroids)</p>
	<p><b>Immunologic therapy</b>            Allergens may trigger severe and fatal asthma episodes.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>Allergy/Immunology physicians have expertise in performance and interpretation of skin testing for immediate hypersensitivity, education to encourage aeroallergen avoidance, and provision of inhalant allergen immunotherapy in properly selected patients.<sup>13</sup></p> <p>Allergen immunotherapy provides significant clinical benefit<sup>14, 15</sup> including for alternaria<sup>16</sup>, which has been associated with life-threatening asthma.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>Anti-IgE therapy has been shown to improve outcomes in high-risk patients<sup>17, 18</sup></p>	<p>Indirect outcome (avoidance, immunotherapy)</p>
	<p><b>Objective monitoring of “poor perceivers”</b>            A major factor contributing to risk for fatal asthma outcomes is under-recognition of asthma; some asthmatic patients are “poor perceivers”.<sup>19</sup></p> <p>Allergy/Immunology physicians perform objective measurements of lung function more frequently than other physicians.<sup>20, 21,</sup></p>	<p>Diagnostic</p>
	<p><b>Action plans</b>            Action plans may reduce asthma mortality.<sup>7</sup> Asthma specialists are more likely to provide action plans to their patients.<sup>22-24</sup></p>	<p>Indirect outcome (action plans)</p>

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