

Three Minute Article for Parents

This treatment could control childhood asthma and save money for parents

B J C Perera  orcid.org/0000-0001-7789-8793

Sri Lanka Journal of Child Health, 2018; 47(1): 92

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4038/sljch.v47i1.8442>

(Keywords: Childhood asthma, treatment, parents)

The author conducted a long-term research project and looked at the disease controlling effectiveness of inhaled steroids in childhood asthma and the cost of the illness before and after controlling the disease with inhaled steroids. The drugs used were beclomethasone and budesonide and the group of patients consisted of 86 moderate to severely affected asthmatic children. The research study was carried out in early nineteen nineties in the Sri Lankan private health sector and published in *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, a reputed medical journal in the United Kingdom.

These drugs were able to adequately control the disease in over 90 per cent of these children. There was a marked reduction in or complete absence of hospitalisations and a drastic reduction in acute attacks of asthma. The money spent by the parents on the disease was reduced by over 80 per cent following the use of these medicines and the resulting control of the disease. The entire cost of the illness including cost of these medications, consultation charges and indirect costs such as loss of work for the parents came down from about rupees 2650 per month on average to around rupees 450 per month on average following the use of these medications and adequate control of the disease. This was a significant saving for the parents. This is the very first time that such a saving has been shown by the use of these medicines for childhood asthma in the world medical literature.

If you have an asthmatic child, please contact your doctor and inquire about these forms of treatment. These medications may be useful for your child and would save money for you. There are other refinements of these medicines, available now, that are even better.

The research work that has been enumerated here did induce the Sri Lankan government to provide these medicines free of charge to asthmatic children through the state medical institutions. Up to that time, these drugs were not available in the government sector hospitals.

Reference

Perera BJC. Efficacy and cost effectiveness of inhaled steroids in asthma in a developing country *Archives of Disease in Childhood* 1995; 72:312-6

Permission for use of the original article for this manuscript was granted by Professor Nicholas Brown, Editor-in-Chief, *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, by electronic mail, which was received at 02.46 am Sri Lankan time on 10th January 2018.