



INHALE

CLINICAL NEWSLETTER

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Dr. Njira Lugogo

Meet the Program Director

College: Virginia Tech, Blacksburg VA BSc Human Nutrition and Foods

Medical School: VCU School of Medicine, Richmond VA

Residency: Internal Medicine, Wake Forest University

Fellowship: Pulmonary, Critical Care Medicine Duke University

Masters in Clinical Research at Duke University, Durham NC

Current roles: Director of Michigan Medicine's Asthma Program, including the Clinical Program and the Asthma Research Program

Dr. Lugogo's Why

“ When the pandemic occurred, there was a seismic shift in our lives leading many of us to have time for introspection. It was during this pivotal time that I was presented with the opportunity to propose a lung disease focused CQI to BCBSM. The level of collaboration I witnessed during the pandemic, specifically the shared focus on one critical outcome & the desire to take care of others above all else was inspirational to me & I embarked on a journey to see INHALE come to fruition. INHALE means a tremendous amount to me, as an individual, as it allows us to amplify the impact of the knowledge we have spent years curating. It allows me to meet & work with so many amazing people & providers across the state & ultimately it allows us to help our patients to live better lives. I feel proud of what INHALE has accomplished & I am eternally grateful to BCBSM for its vision & investment in our CQI. I am excited to see what we can accomplish together. ”

Fun Fact: Dr. Lugogo speaks fluent Swahili and grew up in Kenya!



Medication Updates

Formulary Coverage for Dulera

Effective January 1, 2024 there are formulary changes for patients who have pharmacy benefits administered at CVS and for patients who have Centene Wellcare Medicare Part D plans.

[Learn more here](#)

Flovent for patients under 5

BCBSM approves Flovent ABA for members less than 5 years of age. No prior authorization needed for the 44mcg HFA to bridge coverage due to the Amsmanex inhaler shortage.

INHALE Pharmacist Discusses Flovent Discontinuation

Our partner pharmacist, Nada Farhat, sat down with News 10 of Lansing, MI and discussed the changes to flovent. [Watch here](#)

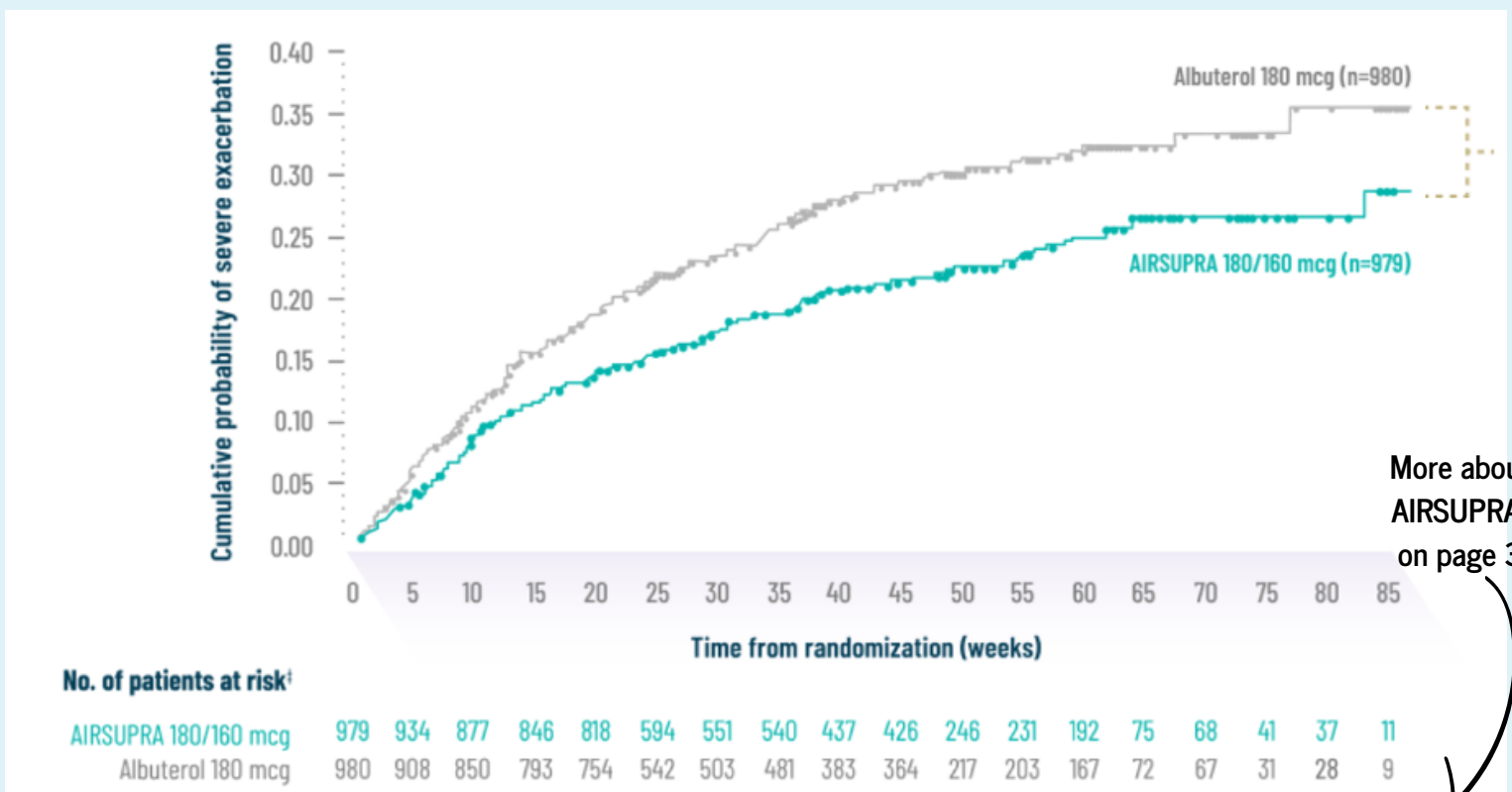


AIRSUPRA: The new kid on the block

AIRSUPRA is the first and only FDA-approved anti-inflammatory rescue inhaler for adults 18 years of age and older that combines 2 medications to help treat bronchoconstriction and help prevent exacerbations. This inhaler combines albuterol (short-acting beta agonist) which helps with rapid bronchodilation and budesonide (inhaled corticosteroid) which helps target inflammation. Using anti-inflammatory fast acting relievers for rescue therapy is supported by both the 2023 GINA Report and NAEPP guidelines, which promote rescue treatment that targets symptoms and inflammation, given that breakthrough symptoms are driven by both bronchoconstriction and unpredictable escalations in inflammation.



AIRSUPRA demonstrated a 28% reduction in exacerbation risk (shown below) in a head-to-head study vs albuterol [HR 0.72 (95% CI: 0.60, 0.86); P<0.001] in the MANDALA study. Additionally, this reduction was evident regardless of baseline lung function, patient exacerbation history, or background maintenance therapy. This makes AIRSUPRA revolutionary and fills an unmet need for patients who are overusing their SABA only (albuterol) rescue therapy - accumulating risks while only targeting bronchoconstriction, when inflammation should also be a key target. Furthermore, the onset and duration of bronchodilation were found to be similar to albuterol in the DENALI study in patients with mild to moderate asthma. In addition, DENALI demonstrated a reduction in bronchodilation with use of SABA on a regular basis likely related to beta receptor downregulation.



More about AIRSUPRA on page 3



Prescribing:

- AIRSUPRA is a combination of albuterol 90 mcg/budesonide 80 mcg in each inhalation (puff)
- A dose of AIRSUPRA is 2 inhalations (puffs) as needed
 - Do not use more than 12 puffs (which equals 6 doses) within a 24-hour period
- Should not to be used as maintenance treatment for asthma
- Available as a pressurized metered dose inhaler that may be used with a spacer



Availability:

- Currently available to patients with commercial insurance only
- Medicare and Medicaid coverage currently pending
- Savings card available at www.airsupra.com which provides AIRSUPRA for as little as \$0 (terms and conditions apply)
- Additional patient assistance options may be available through the manufacturer

References:

1. Papi A, Chipps BE, Beasley R, et al. Albuterol-budesonide fixed-dose combination rescue inhaler for asthma. *N Engl J Med.* 2022;386(22):2071-2083. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa2203163.
2. Chipps BE, Israel E, Beasley R, et al. Albuterol-budesonide pressurized metered dose inhaler in patients with mild-to-moderate asthma: results of the DENALI double-blind randomized controlled trial. *Chest.* 2023;164(3):585-595. doi:10.1016/j.chest.2023.03.035.

Disclosures: Dr Lugogo participated in MANDALA and her institution received financial compensation for this trial. In addition, she has served on advisory boards and as a consultant for AstraZeneca, the manufacturer of AIRSUPRA.

MMIT Formulary Search

Need to know if an inhaler is covered under your patients insurance?

There's an app for that!

MMIT's drug status information is updated nightly to ensure the latest information to guide your prescribing decisions. The app will help you and your staff understand restrictions, identify alternatives, and guide your patients among a multitude of other features.

[Learn more here](#)

Coverage Search **MMIT: Formulary Coverage Tool**
 MMIT
 Designed for iPad
 Free

MMIT provides a single source of reliable and current drug coverage and restriction information. "Need to know if that drug is covered? Are you a prescribing doc and want to select a preferred drug for your patient?" MMIT's drug status information is updated nightly, ensuring you have the data points needed to guide prescribing decisions for your patients. Quickly understand how every health plan and PBM covers all FDA approved medications in your geography. MMIT is designed for iPhone/iPad only (no desktop version).

INHALE has no ties, financial or otherwise, to the maker of this product/tool. Inclusion in our Resource Library does not equal an endorsement of the company.

Search Coverage
 coverage of all FDA approved drugs across 6,500 plans, updated nightly

Understand Restrictions
 and drug status based on your patients' geography and plan channel

Identify Alternatives
 based on what your patients' plans identify as covered alternatives

Guide Patients
 based on up-to-date formulary status and restrictions for their plan

Updates & Reminders

SAVE THE DATE

- Education Workgroup Zoom Meeting
 - March 11th, 2024 - 4:00pm
 - Contact Brenna at bdressle@med.umich.edu to be added to the group
-
- Lung Learning Lab - Session 2 - Dr. Lugogo
 - February 22nd, 2024 - 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - [Register here](#)
 - Lung Learning Lab - Session 3 - Dr. Wahidi
 - March 14th, 2024 - 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - [Register here](#)
 - Lung Learning Lab - Session 4 - Dr. Saba
 - April 11th, 2024 - 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - [Register Here](#)
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- Spring Regional Meetings
 - May 7th, 8th, 14th, & 15th
 - Fall Regional Meetings
 - September 24th, 25th, October 1st, 3rd, 15th, and 16th



The INHALE Coordinating Center is now accepting nominations for our **Executive Committee!**

- Nominations will be accepted through March 31st, 2024.
- You may nominate yourself or a colleague to serve on this committee. Nominees will be notified.
- The inaugural meeting is tentatively scheduled for summer 2024. Meetings will take place quarterly for 1.5 hours.
- We hope the board will be encompassing of our participating specialties and regions across Michigan.

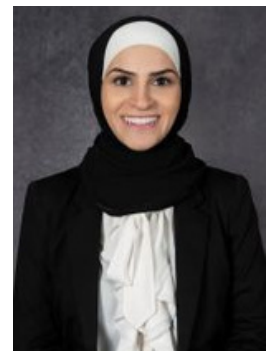
[Click here to nominate!](#)

Ask the Pharmacist: 1:1 Consult with a PharmD

Nada Farhat, PharmD, BCPS, BCACP is a board-certified clinical pharmacist specialist practicing at Michigan Medicine.

Services offered include:

- Explore clinical scenarios and answer patient specific clinical questions
- Review online educational resources available to patients and providers
- Discuss INHALE CQI operational logistics relevant to your practice site
- Develop strategies to operationalize transitions of care at your practice
- Open forum for other clinical questions or specific INHALE related topics



[Sign up here](#)



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inhalecqi.org



inhale-support@med.umich.edu



INHALE
Inspiring Health Advances in Lung Care