# The Pediatrician’s Ready Reference Guide

Current NHLBI guidelines on assessing and monitoring asthma control

## Table 1

### Classifying Asthma Severity & Initiation of Treatment by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENTS OF SEVERITY</th>
<th>INTERMITTENT</th>
<th>PERSISTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE IN YEARS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>5-11</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Impairment**

- **Symptoms**
  - Intermittent: 
    - 0-4 years: ≤2 days/week
    - 5-11 years: ≤2 days/week
    - >12 years: ≤2 days/week
  - Persistent: Daily
  - Severe: Throughout the day

- **Nocturnal Symptoms**
  - Intermittent: 0
  - Persistent: 1-2x/month
  - Severe: ≥2x/month

- **SABA Use**
  - Intermittent: ≤2 days/month
  - Persistent: ≥2 days/week
  - Severe: Several times/day

- **Interferes with normal activity**
  - Intermittent: None
  - Persistent: Minor
  - Severe: Extremely

- **PFT**
  - FEV₁
    - Intermittent: >80%
    - Persistent: 80%
    - Severe: <60%
  - FEV₁/FVC
    - Intermittent: >85%
    - Persistent: Normal ratio
    - Severe: Reduced by >5%

- **Exacerbations requiring systemic corticosteroids**
  - Intermittent: 0-1x/year
  - Persistent: ≥2x/month OR >4x/year + risk factors
  - Severe: >2x/year

**Recommended Step for Initiating Treatment**

- **Step 1**
  - 0-1x/year

- **Step 2**
  - ≥2x/month OR >4x/year + risk factors
  - >2x/year

- **Step 3**
  - Several times/day

- **Step 4 or Step 5**
  - Reduced by >5%

**Abbreviation:**
- FEV₁: forced expiratory volume
- FVC: forced vital capacity
- PFT: pulmonary function test
- NHLBI: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
- SABA: short-acting beta agonist

From Reddy AP, et al.4