

A Lay Summary of “Severe asthma and remission prospects in Europe (SHARP): insights from a multicentre observational study based on the European Severe Asthma Registry”

Biological medicines have transformed the treatment of severe asthma, but an important question remains: are patients actually reaching remission?

To answer this, this SHARP Clinical Research Collaboration publication analysed data from 13,455 adults with severe asthma across 22 European countries, the largest pan-European study of its kind. The study examined four key features of severe asthma that are closely linked to remission: asthma attacks, symptom control, lung function and the need for daily oral corticosteroids. It also evaluated the main biomarkers of type 2 inflammation, namely blood eosinophil counts, FeNO and total serum IgE levels.

The results revealed an important finding. Although almost 8 out of 10 patients were receiving biologic therapy, many continued to experience active disease. Poor asthma control, frequent exacerbations, persistent airflow limitation and ongoing oral corticosteroid use remained common. In addition, markers of type 2 inflammation often remained elevated despite treatment.

The study also identified a subgroup of patients who developed multiple markers of severe disease within less than 10 years after diagnosis, suggesting that some people experience a much faster progression of severe asthma than others.

These findings show that achieving remission involves much more than prescribing a biologic. Earlier identification of high-risk patients, prompt referral to specialist severe asthma centres and a comprehensive assessment of symptoms, lung function, exacerbations and inflammation are essential to improve long-term outcomes.

This work provides one of the strongest real-world evidence bases to date for redefining remission as the ultimate treatment target in severe asthma.