

# The Medical Letter<sup>®</sup>

## on Drugs and Therapeutics

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Objective Drug Reviews Since 1959

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# The Medical Letter®

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Volume 57 (Issue 1480)

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### IN BRIEF

## A New Albuterol Inhaler (*ProAir RespiClick*) for Asthma

The short-acting beta<sub>2</sub>-agonist albuterol sulfate is now available as a dry powder for inhalation (*ProAir RespiClick* – Teva) for prevention and treatment of bronchospasm in patients ≥12 years old. *ProAir RespiClick* is the only short-acting beta<sub>2</sub>-agonist dry powder inhaler available in the US.

Table 1. Short-Acting Beta<sub>2</sub>-Agonist Inhalers for Asthma

Drug	Formulations	Cost <sup>1</sup>
<b>Albuterol</b>		
<i>ProAir HFA</i> (Teva)	HFA MDI 90 mcg/inh	\$50.00
<i>Proventil HFA</i> (Merck)	(60 <sup>2</sup> or 200 inh/unit)	64.80
<i>Ventolin HFA</i> (GSK)		45.20
<i>ProAir RespiClick</i> (Teva)	DPI 90 mcg/inh (200 inh/unit)	50.00
<b>Levalbuterol</b>		
<i>Xopenex HFA</i> (Sunovion)	HFA MDI 45 mcg/inh (80, 200 inh/unit)	62.10

HFA = hydrofluoroalkane; MDI = metered-dose inhaler; inh = inhalation;  
DPI = dry powder inhaler

1. Approximate WAC for one inhaler providing 200 inhalations. WAC = wholesaler acquisition cost or manufacturer's published price to wholesalers; WAC represents a published catalogue or list price and may not represent an actual transactional price. Source: AnalySource® Monthly, October 5, 2015. Reprinted with permission by First Databank, Inc. All rights reserved. ©2015. www.fdbhealth.com/policies/drug-pricing-policy.
2. Only *Ventolin HFA* is available in units providing 60 inhalations.

Metered-dose inhalers (MDIs) use a hydrofluoroalkane (HFA) propellant. They require coordination of inhalation with actuation; using them with a valved holding chamber minimizes this need, but decreases portability because of the size of the chamber. **Dry powder inhalers** such as *ProAir RespiClick*, which are breath-actuated, do not require a propellant and do not have to be primed before use. They do not require coordination of inhalation with actuation, but patients must be capable of performing a rapid, deep inhalation, which might be difficult during a severe asthma attack.

The recommended dose of *ProAir RespiClick* for treatment of bronchospasm is 2 inhalations, but 1 inhalation may be sufficient for some patients. The dose can be repeated every 4-6 hours as needed. For prevention of exercise-induced bronchospasm, the recommended dosage is 2 inhalations 15-30 minutes before exercise.

Each *ProAir RespiClick* inhaler includes a dose counter. Opening the mouthpiece cap readies a dose for administration and causes the counter to count down by 1; closing the cap without inhaling the medication wastes that dose. The inhaler should be cleaned with a dry cloth as needed.

*ProAir RespiClick* may contain trace levels of milk proteins; it is contraindicated for use in patients with a history of a severe hypersensitivity reaction to milk proteins. ■

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