

mild, moderate, and severe. Symptoms increase in frequency or intensity until the last category of severe persistent asthma (Box 21-14). These categories provide a stepwise approach to the pharmacologic management, environmental control, and educational interventions needed for each category (Liu, Covar, Spahn, et al, 2016). These categories emphasize the multifaceted aspect of the disease for consideration of effects on present quality of life and functional capacity and the future risk of adverse events.

Box 21-14

Asthma Severity Classification in Children*

Step 5 or 6: Severe Asthma

Continual symptoms throughout the day

Frequent nighttime symptoms (>1 time/week ages 0 to 4 and 7 nights/week, ages 5 and older)

Pulmonary expiratory flow (PEF): <60%

Forced expiratory volume in 1 second (FEV₁): <75% of predicted value

Interference with normal activity: Extremely limited

Use of short-acting β -agonist for symptom control: Several times a day

Step 3 or 4: Moderate Asthma

Daily symptoms

Nighttime symptoms: Three to four times a month (0 to 4 years old), >1/week but not nightly (5 to 11 years old)

PEF: 60% to 80% of predicted value (ages 5 and older)

FEV₁: 75% to 80% (ages 5 and older)