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Work to develop a pill to treat asthma has shown massive promise, according to the charity Asthma UK. Most of the five million people in the UK with asthma try to control the condition using inhalers. While the study was small, the charity said the drug

could be a step towards a new wave of treatments. Asthma UK's director of research and policy, Samantha Walker, said the prospect of a pill being available over the pharmacy counter is a long way off. But she's expressed cautious optimism. was only over 12 weeks. It is an exciting opportunity, may be the beginning of something big but I think you have to have those caveats in place where this is quite early days. Earlier I spoke to Professor Chris Brightling from the University of Leicester. His team carried out the trial of the new pill on asthma sufferers and it's his results that have been published in The Lancet Respiratory Medicine Journal. Earlier, I asked him what their findings were. receptor that this drug blocks for a number of years and we've identified that it increases in those patients with more severe disease and we know

that it is implicated in the movement of cells that go into the airway, particularly inflammatory cells. We've also recently shown that it's important on the structural cells. What I mean by that is the lining of the airway. How effective was it in this trial? What was unique about this study was we looked at asthma in lots of different ways. We looked at symptoms, breathing tests and also we took samples from the airway. We also undertook CT scans of the chest. What was really quite remarkable was there was improvements with all of those. The patients felt better, their breathing tests improved and the inflammation dramatically reduced. There were improvements in the repair of the lining of the airway and there were improvements on the ski team scam. Is this medication that people would take all of the time, rather than picking up an inhaler when they require it? It wouldn't be a cure, so it would be a

preventer. Knowing the study that we looked at what happened when patients stop the treatment. Their asthma went back to where it started. It wouldn't be a medicine they would take to cure their asthma. It would need to be taken long-term. But better than having an inhaler and suffering an awful attack. The results suggest it would reduce attacks and hospitalisations. It's absolutely better than tablet steroids which come at a price with increased risks of diabetes and osteoporosis. This would be a major advance and it may also enable patients to... Lots of questions. It was a small study. How relevant those results to the population as a whole? One of the things we measured, the inflammation, is being measured in larger studies with tablet steroids. We know the reduction in information would be

predicted to cause a halving in asthma attacks and a halving in hospital admissions. Because of that, then the programme of work has been exonerated and it is now in late stage studies. How quickly could it be out for the population? The studies have started. Will finish in 18 months' time of the programme will be finished within three years. I would hope that I will be able to prescribe it and give it to patients that I see in the clinic. If you had to sum it up in one word, what sort of breakthrough would this be called? I think it's a game changer. In a moment, a full round-up of the sport but let's remind ourselves of some of the images from the Olympic's opening ceremony, which took place in the early hours of this morning in took place in the early hours of this morning in Rio.