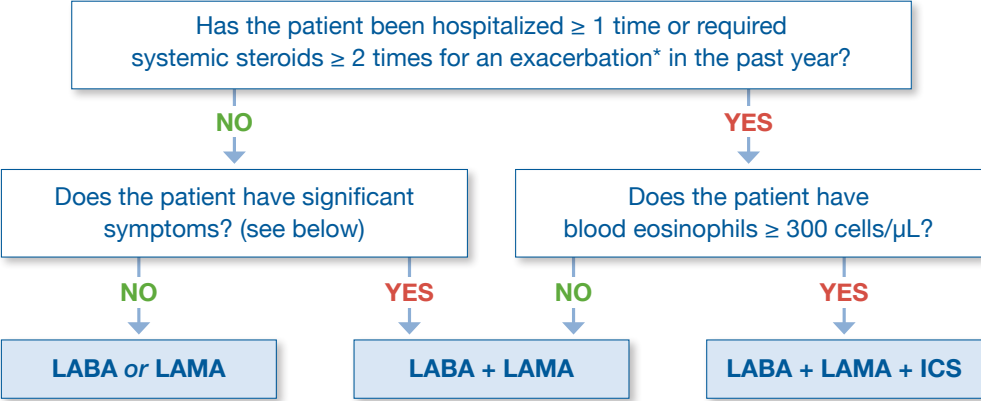


# Selecting initial therapy for COPD<sup>1</sup>



Use one of two standardized tools to assess symptom severity:



**Modified Medical Research Council (mMRC) dyspnea score**

Or ask: “Do you walk slower than people of the same age because of breathlessness, or have to stop for breath on LEVEL ground?”



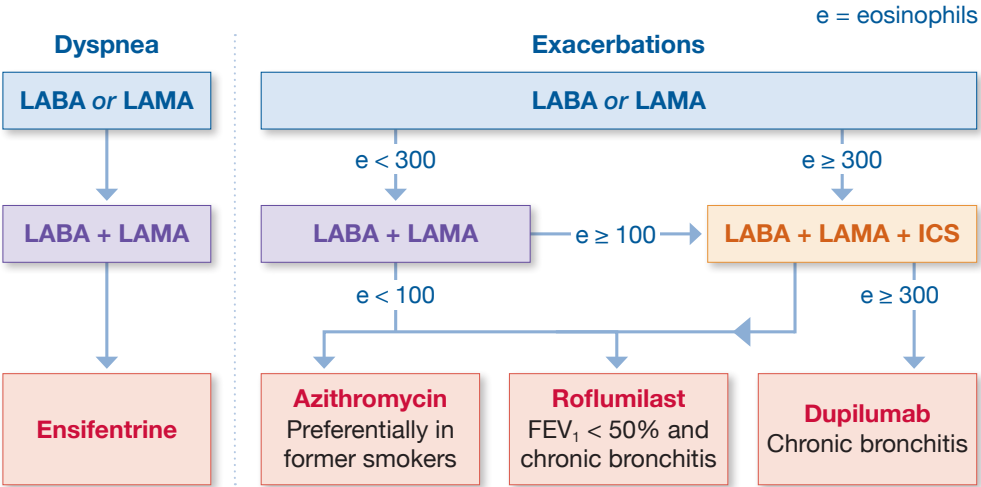
**COPD Assessment test (CAT)**

Assesses overall health, not just dyspnea

**Significant symptoms** are an mMRC  $\geq 2$  or a CAT score  $\geq 10$ .




\*Establish exacerbation history: Exacerbations are discrete episodes of worsening symptoms (i.e., increased dyspnea, sputum volume, or purulence) over  $< 14$  days that require intervention.

## Escalating treatment based on symptoms or exacerbations



Medications in bottom row: Refer to pulmonologist if available.

# Inhaler types by class

|  | Metered dose inhaler (MDI)  | Dry powder inhaler (DPI)  | Soft mist inhaler (SMI)   | Nebulizers  |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Inhaler class</b><br>Example inhalers and platforms | <br>Aerosphere, HFA, RediHaler | <br>Diskus, Ellipta, Pressair, RespiClick* | <br>Respimat | <br>nebulizers |
| <b>LABA</b>  |   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>LAMA</b>  |   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>ICS</b>   | ✓   | ✓   |   | ✓   |
| <b>LABA + LAMA</b>                                     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |   |
| <b>LABA + ICS</b>                                      | ✓   | ✓   |   |   |
| <b>LABA + LAMA + ICS</b>                               | ✓   | ✓   |   |   |
| <b>Rescue inhalers</b>                                 | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>Tips for use</b>                                    | requires dexterity<br>use a spacer to help with delivery  | powder can be irritating<br>requires inspiratory capacity   | requires dexterity  | requires a nebulizer machine  |

\*Platforms shown available in two or more inhalers.

ICS = inhaled corticosteroids; LABA = long-acting beta agonists; LAMA = long-acting muscarinic antagonists



## Inhaler technique education

Videos from the American Lung Association to help teach patients about best use of devices.

(1) Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease. *Global strategy for the diagnosis, management, and prevention of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease*. 2025:1-202.



Balanced information for better care



Pharmaceutical Assistance  
Contract for the Elderly



**These are general recommendations only; specific clinical decisions should be made by the treating clinician based on an individual patient's clinical condition.** This material is provided by Alosa Health, a nonprofit organization which accepts no funding from any pharmaceutical company. It was supported by the PACE Program of the Department of Aging of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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