



Nebulizers Increase SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Exposure Risk for Healthcare Professionals

Issue

Per [guidance issued by the CDC](#), Healthcare professional (HCP) stratification of exposure risk is based upon prolonged close contact with unprotected COVID-19 positive patients when their nose/mouth may be exposed to material potentially infectious with the SARS-CoV-2 virus. With the current shortages of PPE the CDC has recognized that HCPs may be present for procedures that are likely to poorly control an infected individual's respiratory secretions. Without wearing adequate PPE, these procedures, including NEBULIZER TREATMENTS, are categorized as *High-Risk*.

Other procedures include cardiopulmonary resuscitation, intubation, extubation, bronchoscopy, and sputum induction.

PharMerica is issuing this clinical alert to facilities as a measure to minimize potential HCP exposure risk in PPE shortage situations by converting residents on nebulizer treatment to alternative handheld inhaler treatment, where possible.

Individuals Affected

- Patients receiving nebulizer therapy including, but not limited to, **albuterol**, **Accuneb®**, **acetylcysteine**, **Brovana®**, **Duoneb®**, **ipratropium**, **levalbuterol**, **Lonhala Magnair®**, **Pulmozyme®**, **Perforomist®**, and **Xopenex®**.

Action Steps

Facilities should:

- Identify current orders for all nebulizer solution medications.
- Consider soliciting recommendations from prescribers and switch patients to alternative, non-nebulized agent for treatment of indicated condition.
 - Please reference the abbreviated table on the next page for your convenience.
- If determination is made that patient should NOT be transitioned to alternative therapy, ensure HCPs adhere to COVID-19 PUI PPE guidance per CDC, if resident presents as potentially contagious.

CLINICAL ALERT

MARCH 2020



All treatment recommendations should ultimately be made using professional judgment by qualified health care professionals directly involved in the patient's care

<u>Drug Class</u>	SABA	LABA	Mucolytics	Anticholinergics	Combination Anticholinergic & SABA
<u>General Indication</u>	Acute treatment of allergenic / inflammatory respiratory conditions	Maintenance treatment of allergenic / inflammatory respiratory conditions	Adjuvant therapy in respiratory conditions	Maintenance treatment of allergenic / inflammatory respiratory conditions	Maintenance treatment of allergenic / inflammatory respiratory conditions
<u>Nebulizer Medications</u>	AccuNeb® albuterol sulfate Xopenex® Nebulizer Solution levalbuterol	Brovana® Perforomist®	Acetylcysteine Pulmozyme®	Ipratropium Lonhala Magnair®	DuoNeb® ipratropium + albuterol
<u>Non-Nebulized Medication Market Alternatives</u>	Albuterol MDI Ventolin® MDI Proventil® MDI Proair® MDI Proair® Respiclick® MDI Levalbuterol MDI Xopenex® MDI	Serevent® Diskus® Striverdi® Respimat®	*Mucolytics such as these are only available as nebulizer solutions. PPE precautions should be assumed. If pts. Have CF, they are particularly vulnerable to communicable respiratory infections.	Spiriva® Handihaler® Spiriva® Respimat® Atrovent® Incruse® Ellipta®	Combivent® Respimat®