

Teens with asthma

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The European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA) launched a new report looking at adherence to asthma treatments among young people on World Asthma Day, 3 May 2016. It will be presented at [IPCRG 2016](#)

Adolescent patients with asthma encounter difficulties in following their medication but the reasons are unclear; *HEY YA! Health Literacy, Young Patients with Asthma and Adherence to treatment: EFA Report and European Recommendations* is a new EFA publication based on the results of a 2015 survey that looked at the health status, asthma severity, attitude, treatment scheme, role of physicians and carers and health literacy of adolescents.

200 adolescents between 12 and 17 years of age took part in the EFA survey, 50 each from four European countries - France, Germany, Spain and United Kingdom. The majority were boys and from urban city areas.

Almost all had good experiences following instructions provided by their physician. Most patients (96%), especially in Germany (100%), Spain (100%) and the United Kingdom (98%) have a good understanding of their doctor's instructions on how to take their asthma medication.

EFA identified **six reasons behind non-adherence to treatment.**

The most important items that cover almost 90% of explanation of adherence of young people with asthma are and in order of importance:

1. Forgetfulness: Sometimes I forget to take my medicine
2. Rebellion: I don't do what the doctor tells me
3. Good days: When I feel better I stop taking my asthma medicine - this was correlated with those who were sporty, so requires better education about the need for exercise AND medication
4. Support: My Doctor encourages me to deal with my asthma
5. Carelessness: I don't take my asthma seriously
6. Ignorant: I am aware of not taking my asthma medicine

Asthma is one of the major non-communicable diseases worldwide and estimates foreseen its prevalence will continue to increase. Therefore the HEY YA report recommends

- Healthcare professionals to act as mentors in supporting adolescents to increase adherence, especially since they evoke a high degree of trust from adolescents.
- Sharing decision-making with teens, and tailored health literacy materials to enable adolescents to take responsibility about their own health and asthma medication.

Other considerations were multidisciplinary care coordination to better support adolescent patients and to identify those at risk and the use of a wider variety of communication and reminder aids such as apps, alarm and conducting **additional research** to forecast the long-term consequences associated with poor adherence in adolescence and to curve down asthma.

Access the report [here](#).