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Title: What is missing in the asthma control test? The relationship between compliance, inhaler technique and level of control

Ms. Sawsan 30406 Baddar baddarsawsan@yahoo.com¹ and Prof. Dr Omar 30407 AlRawas orawas@squ.edu.om¹. ¹ Medicine, Sultan Qaboos University, Al Khoud, Oman, 123 .

Body: Introduction: Asthma control test as many other validated questionnaires are used to assess level of control. However, they do not identify factors that may lead to poor control such as medication compliance and inhaler technique. In this study level of asthma control was assessed by using asthma control test (ACT) and simultaneously the accuracy of compliance with preventer medications and inhaler technique were evaluated. The main objective of the study is to find out the relationship between compliance and inhaler technique with the level of asthma control. Methodology: Prospective 3 months study (1st February – 31st May 2011) was conducted in a university hospital in Oman. Asthmatic adult patients on preventer inhaled medications were included. ACT was used to assess level of asthma control. Inhaler technique was evaluated using a standardized checklist. Compliance was assessed using a pre designed scoring system. Results: 218 patients were assessed. Poor control was found in 126 (58%) patients, of whom 74 (59%) had poor compliance and 34 (27%) had poor inhaler technique. There was no significant difference in the level of control between patients with good and partial compliance (60% vs 59%). Only 35 (16%) patients had good level of control and good compliance and good inhaler technique. Conclusion: Since compliance and inhaler technique have a direct effect on the level of control, they should be part of all asthma assessment tools.