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Title: The effects of extrafine beclomethasone/formoterol on hyperinflation and airway geometry in COPD patients

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Body: Aim of this study was to assess the effects of extrafine beclomethasone/formoterol treatment on lung hyperinflation and airway geometry in COPD. Data of lobar volume (%pred) and specific lobar airway volumes (siVaw) at FRC and TLC were obtained with functional imaging in 25 COPD patients (GOLD II 14, III 7, IV 4) pre- and 4h post-bronchodilator (post BD) both at baseline and after 6 months of treatment. A post BD drop was observed for both functional residual capacity (FRC) and total lung capacity (TLC) lobar volumes at baseline (FRC:-10%, $p<0.01$;TLC:-2%, $p<0.01$) and after 6 months (FRC:-12%, $p<0.01$;TLC:-2%, $p<0.01$) as index of reduced hyperinflation. siVaw did increase 4 hours after administration at both time points (+10%, $p<0.01$, and +8%, $p<0.01$).

The 4h post-BD drop in hyperinflation at FRC was positively associated with the degree of hyperinflation ($r=0.4$, $p<0.01$). A drop in pre-bronchodilation hyperinflation was also observed at TLC after 6 months of treatment (-1%, $p<0.01$). Extrafine beclomethasone/formoterol decreased hyperinflation and increased airway volume in COPD patients 4h after bronchodilator. Moreover the chronic treatment over 6 months decreased also the pre-bronchodilator hyperinflation at TLC, indicating a progressive reduction of air trapping with treatment.