Asthma is a chronic inflammatory airway disease characterized by recurrent exacerbations and reversible airflow limitation. 

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Approximately 5–10% of patients with asthma have severe uncontrolled asthma, which is associated with significant impairment to health-related quality of life and substantial healthcare-related costs. 

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In addition, physicians also reported whether the patient had discontinued asthma medication at the time of assessment, based on the European Respiratory Society/American Thoracic Society (ERS/ATS) criteria for uncontrolled asthma. 

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The rates of EOS or FeNO testing during the past year among all patients with severe asthma, as well as rates of FeNO testing among patients with severe asthma with EOS count <150/µL were reported.

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A total of 84.5% of patients with either EOS or FeNO test results available in their medical records, with the highest proportion in the UK (90.8%), and the lowest proportion in Italy (68.9%) (Figure 1).

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RESULTS

A total of 218 physicians were contacted (178 pulmonologists and 40 allergists). 

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Among the selected patients with severe asthma (n=420), mean age (standard deviation) (SD) was 46.9 ± 14.3 years, 62.1% were female (Table 1).

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CONCLUSIONS

Testing of EOS count is routine performed among patients with uncontrolled asthma in the EU. 

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FeNO testing is low overall, but continues to be low even among patients with severe asthma with EOS count <150/µL, which may limit the ability of physicians to identify additional patients with type 2 asthma by increasing FeNO testing among patients with severe asthma, specifically among those with EOS count <150/µL. 

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As type 2 asthma treatment based on EOS and FeNO levels has shown to be advantageous in improving asthma outcomes in the scope of personalized medicine, practitioners may be able to use FeNO and EOS testing to identify additional patients with type 2 asthma by increasing FeNO testing among patients with severe asthma, specifically among those with EOS count <150/µL. 

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Available from November 1, 2020, and in the United Kingdom from December 1, 2020.

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Given the updated GINA 2019 guideline recommendations, there is a need to understand the rates of EOS and FeNO biomarker testing in real-world clinical practice.

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To assess EOS and FeNO testing rates in patients with severe asthma, from patient records and reported: 

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Physician practices, including pulmonologists and allergists, from the EU5, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom; OCS, oral corticosteroid; SD, standard deviation. 

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The rates of EOS or FeNO testing during the past year among all patients with severe asthma, as well as FeNO testing among patients with severe asthma with EOS count <150/µL were reported.

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Physicians abstracted medical history during the past 12 months at least 5 mg of OCS per day) during the 6 months. 

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Physicians abstracted medical history during the past 12 months including blood EOS count ≥150/µL and/or fractional exhaled nitric oxide (FeNO) ≥300 ppb (German) (4). 

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