



# Effective Health Care

## Buteyko Breathing

### Nomination Summary Document

#### Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Buteyko breathing will go forward for refinement as a systematic review. The scope of this topic, including populations, interventions, comparators, and outcomes, will be further developed in the refinement phase.
- When key questions have been drafted, they will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective Health Care (EHC) Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.

#### Topic Description

**Nominator:** Organization

**Nomination Summary:** The nominator is interested in the effectiveness of the Buteyko breathing method for reducing bronchodilator and inhaled steroid use and improving the health status of adults and children with asthma.

**Staff-Generated PICO**

**Population(s):** All individuals with asthma over the age of 5

**Intervention(s):** Buteyko breathing

**Comparator(s):** Treatment as usual (bronchodilators and inhaled steroids)

**Outcome(s):** Improvement or elimination of asthma symptoms (cough, wheeze, dyspnea); reduction or elimination of bronchodilator and inhaled steroid use in the short-medium term; reduction or elimination of inhaled and oral steroid use in the medium or long term; and improved health status.

**Key Questions from Nominator:** 1. For adults and children with asthma, what is the effectiveness of the Buteyko breathing method on reducing bronchodilator and inhaled steroid use and improving health status?

#### Considerations

- The topic meets all EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)

- Medical treatment for asthma consists of daily controller medications to prevent asthma exacerbations and rescue medications as needed to relieve acute symptoms. There is no known cure for asthma; therefore, all treatments are directed toward symptom reduction.
- Buteko breathing represents a method of self care that may be of interest to clinicians, patients, and parents of children with asthma as an adjunct to standard therapies. The Buteyko breathing method is intended to promote breathing patterns that can help maintain the correct ratio of oxygen and carbon dioxide within the bloodstream. Although uncommon in the US, it is sometimes used as a treatment strategy outside of the US. Several randomized controlled trials are available that assess the effectiveness of Buteyko and other breathing techniques on medication use and symptom control; therefore, a review at this time may be of value.