OCS OVEREXPOSED
THINKING BEYOND THE BURST

OCS OVEREXPOSED
CONVERSATION STARTER

Oral corticosteroids (OCS) are important medicines but a growing body of evidence indicates there are potentially serious short- and long-term unintended consequences of OCS overexposure. Today, OCS use has become a signal that a patient may need an updated treatment plan, or support with adherence.

Innovative treatment options target certain types of difficult-to-control or severe asthma in ways never before possible, reducing the need for OCS.

When treating patients with asthma, adherence to medication should be assessed and an updated treatment plan should be considered if the patient:

- ☐ Had more than two courses – or bursts – of OCS in a one year period
- ☐ Used a quick-relief or rescue inhaler more than two times per week
- ☐ Refilled a quick-relief or rescue inhaler more than two times a year
- ☐ Struggles doing everyday activities like exercising, household chores or playing with children or grandchildren
- ☐ Had one or more asthma flares requiring a call to 911, emergency room visit, urgent care visit or hospitalization in the past year

OCS overexposure has both short- and long-term risks. Evaluate your patients' treatment plan to protect them from the risks below and ensure they are on an appropriate treatment plan.

SHORT-TERM RISKS INCLUDE:

- ☐ elevated eye pressure (glaucoma)
- ☐ fluid retention (causing swelling in lower legs)
- ☐ high blood pressure
- ☐ weight gain (abdomen, face and neck)
- ☐ problems with mood, stress, memory and behavior

LONG-TERM RISKS INCLUDE:

- ☐ cataracts (clouded vision)
- ☐ infections
- ☐ osteoporosis/bone fractures
- ☐ high blood sugar (can trigger or worsen diabetes)
- ☐ thin skin, bruising, and a slower healing process for wounds
- ☐ suppressed adrenal gland production

PRINT THIS PAGE FOR YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR ASTHMA PATIENTS.