



Study at a glance



Data source: Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD) Aurum



Sample size: 2.56 million adults



Total prescriptions: 12,029,952 in 2023



Equivalent to: ~9.2 million people nationwide

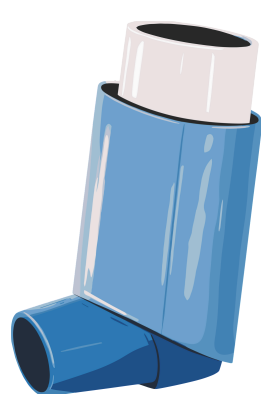


Study period: Jan–Dec 2023

How corticosteroids are used

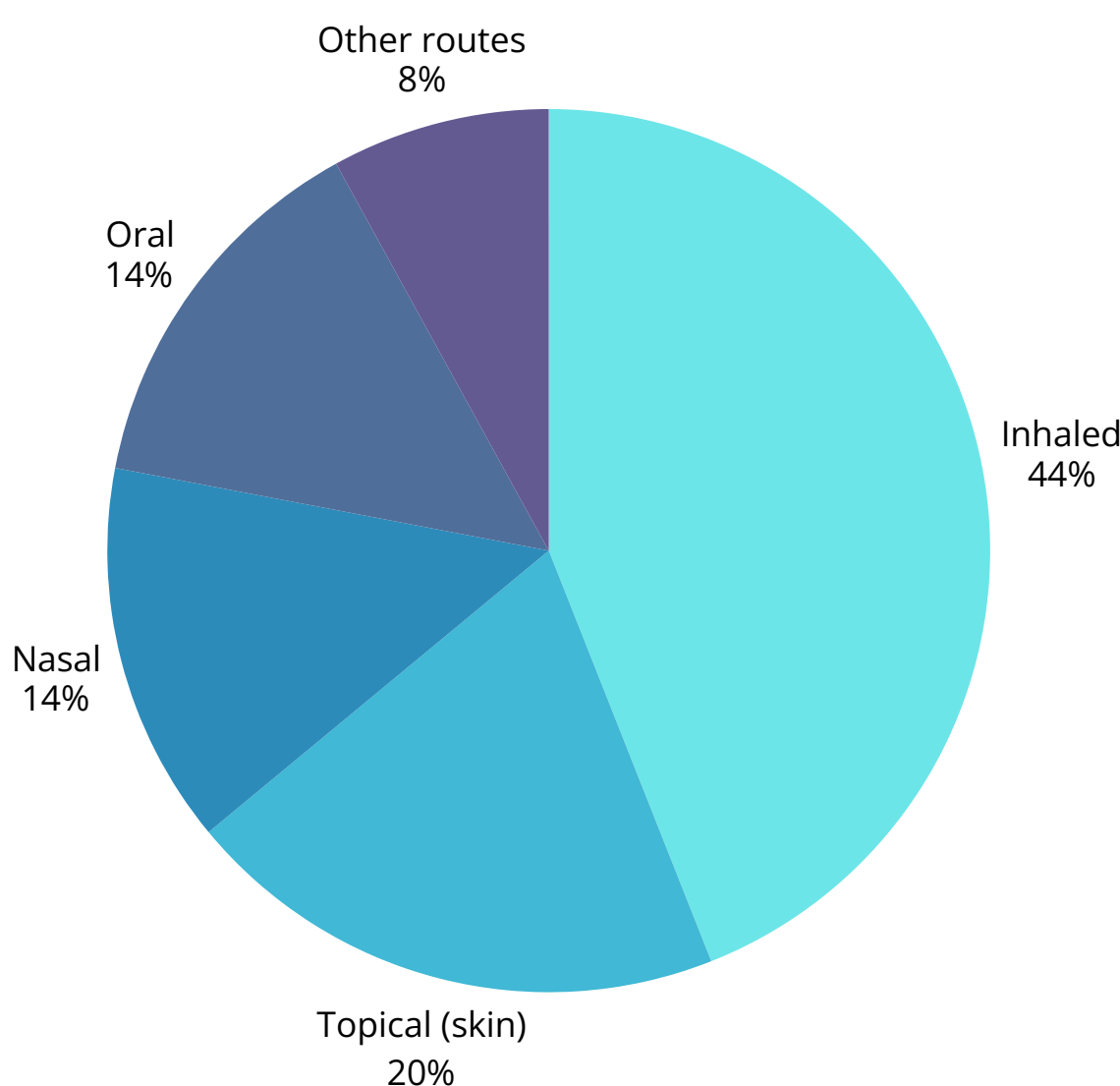
Corticosteroids help control inflammation in conditions like asthma, eczema, and arthritis.

They're prescribed in many forms, from inhalers to creams and tablets.



Inhalers are most frequently prescribed — often used year-round for chronic respiratory disease.

Route of administration  
(% of prescriptions)



Who is prescribed corticosteroids?



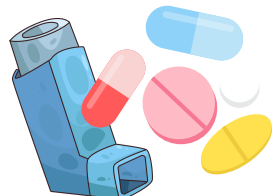
57% of patients were female



Median age: 56 years



Most prescriptions were among White (78%) and South Asian (8%) ethnic groups



Some patients were prescribed more than one type of corticosteroid

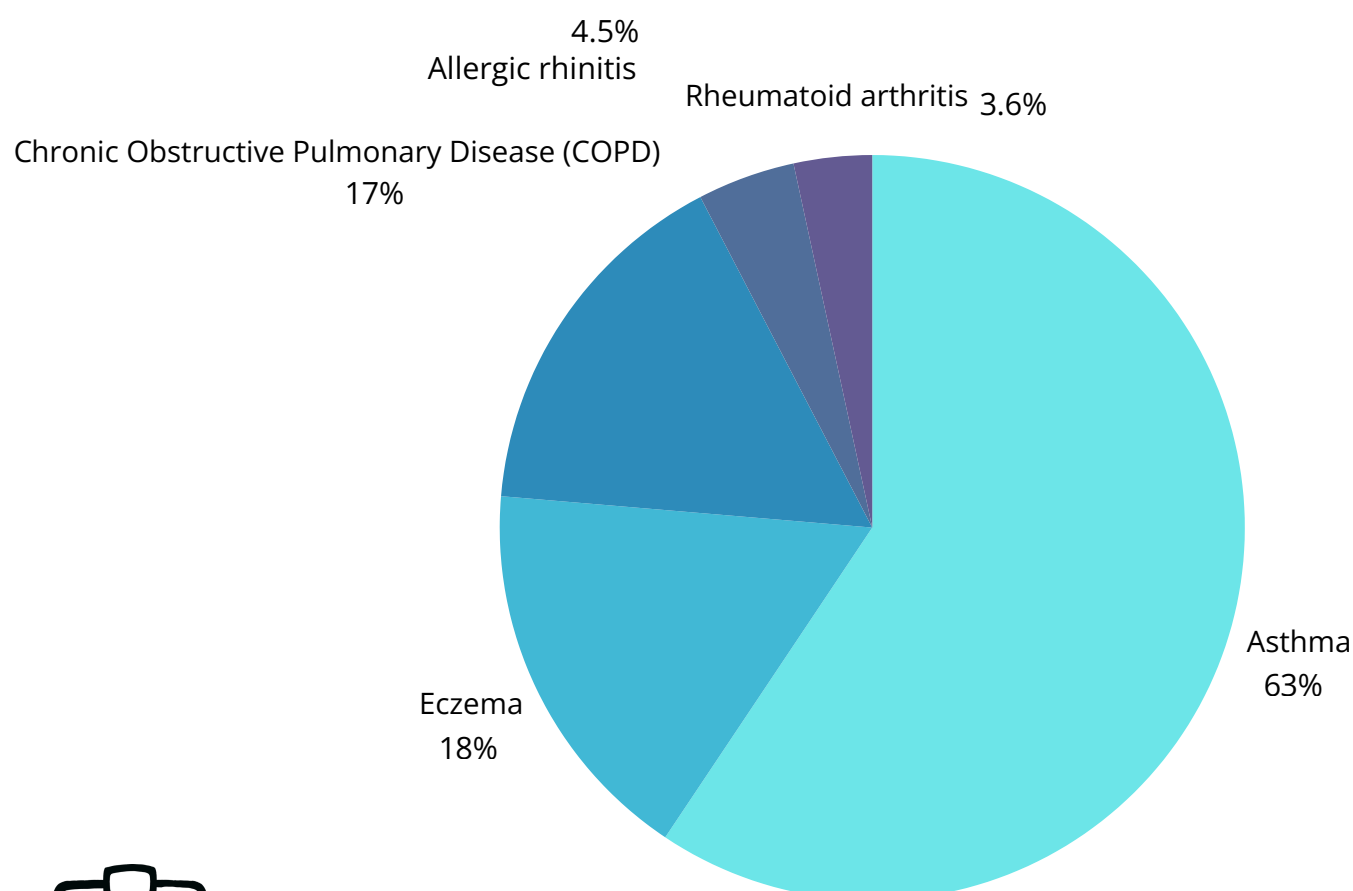
Whittaker, H. R., Jani, M., Pearce, F. A., Bell, S., Kallis, C., Hawcutt, D., Brown, S., Neves, A. L., Robson, J., Shi, T., Lax, S. J., Sheikh, A., & Quint, J. K. (2025). Prescriptions of corticosteroids in primary care and related clinical indications: A national population-based cohort study in England. *The Lancet Primary Care*, 1(6), 100080. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanprc.2025.100080>

Funded by HDR UK's Inflammation and Immunity Driver Programme



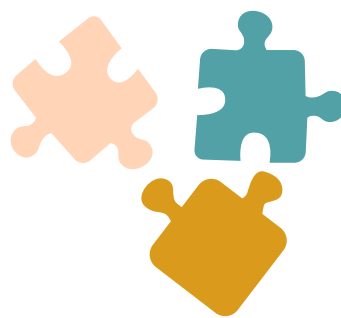
Why are they prescribed?

Top recorded clinical indications  
(within 2 years of prescription)



Only 49% of patients had a recorded clinical indication in their records.

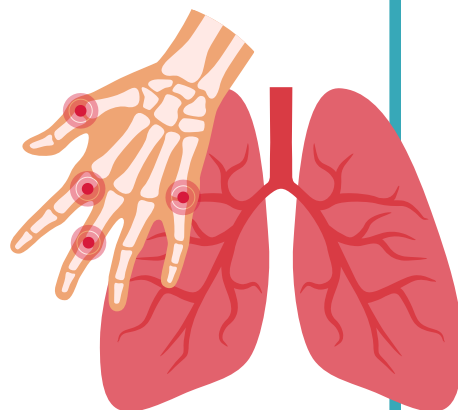
Co-existing Conditions



Many people need corticosteroids for more than one system

Among patients with multiple conditions:

- 54% had both respiratory and skin diseases
- 30% had respiratory and joint diseases
- 7% had skin and joint diseases



Key Takeaways:



Corticosteroids remain essential but carry side effects when used long-term.



Widespread prescribing — often without a clearly documented indication — highlights a need for improved record-keeping.



As new steroid-sparing treatments emerge, these data provide a baseline to evaluate safer, more targeted care.