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Corresponding author:
Cheong Lieng Teng

tengcl@gmail.com

Author Affiliation:
International Medical University.

Suboptimal asthma control and associated factors in ambulatory care: protocol of a systematic review of Malaysian studies

Teng, CL; Pau, JZW; Kok, RWQ; Lee, JY; Ting, MKX; Lee, KL.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Support - IMU University.

Review Stage at time of this submission - Preliminary searches.

Conflicts of interest - None declared.

INPLASY registration number: INPLASY202530078

Amendments - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 18 March 2025 and was last updated on 18 March 2025.

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective What is the status of asthma control amongst the children, adolescents and adults with asthma in Malaysian primary care and what are the associated factors suboptimal asthma control?

Rationale This study aims to document the prevalence of suboptimal asthma control and its associated factors. These data will assist future interventional studies for this health problem in Malaysia.

Condition being studied Suboptimal asthma control refers to a situation where asthma symptoms are not adequately managed despite treatment. This can include frequent symptoms, limitations in daily activities, and the need for rescue medications more often than recommended.

METHODS

Search strategy We plan to search bibliographic databases for Malaysian studies that evaluated asthma control using a validated rating scale, such as GINA criteria, Asthma Control Test, Asthma Control Questionnaire. These scales are commonly used to assess asthma control in the research setting in Malaysia. Bibliographic search using combinations of these terms: Asthma; Asthma Control Questionnaire; Asthma Control Test; GINA; Global Initiative for Asthma; and Malaysia. All publications up to 31 December 2025 will be included.

Participant or population Children, adolescents and adults with bronchial asthma in Malaysia.

Intervention None.

Comparator None.

Study designs to be included Cross-sectional studies or baseline data of cohort studies.

Eligibility criteria (a) Study participants are children or adolescents or adults; (b) Studies conducted in Malaysia; (c) Evaluated asthma control using validated scales (such as: GINA criteria, Asthma Control Test, Asthma Control Questionnaire).

Information sources An extensive literature search will be carried out on two electronic databases (PubMed, Scopus), and supplemented by a Google Scholar search.

Main outcome(s) Suboptimal asthma control. In GINA criteria, partly controlled and uncontrolled will be merged as suboptimal control. In Asthma Control Test, score <20 is considered as suboptimal control. In Asthma Control Questionnaire, score <1 is considered as suboptimal control.

Additional outcome(s) Use of inhaled steroid (and its adherence), acute exacerbation or emergency room visit, hospitalization.

Data management References retrieved will be processed using citation manager Endnote 20. Relevant data (number of participants with and without suboptimal asthma control) in the included studies will be extracted by a pair of investigators independently, to minimize potential bias and error as well as to resolve any disagreements.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis The studies identified will then be assessed for methodological validity using JBI critical appraisal checklist for cross-sectional studies.

Strategy of data synthesis Prevalence data of suboptimal asthma control for children, adolescent and adult asthma patients will be extracted. Meta-analysis will be performed using MedCalc Statistical Software for proportion (prevalence of suboptimal asthma control). MedCalc uses a Freeman-Tukey transformation to calculate the weighted summary proportion under the fixed and random effects model.

Subgroup analysis Age groups (children age <12 years, adolescent age 13-18 years and adults age ≥18 years), if data are available.

Sensitivity analysis None.

Language restriction None.

Country(ies) involved Malaysia.

Other relevant information This systematic review will be prepared following PRISMA guidelines.

Keywords Adolescent; Adult; Asthma; asthma control; Child; Malaysia; Meta-Analysis.

Dissemination plans Publication of manuscript in a journal.

Contributions of each author

Author 1 - Cheong Lieng Teng - Protocol preparation; literature search and management; statistical analysis; manuscript preparation.

Email: tengcl@gmail.com

Author 2 - June Zhang Wei Pau - Protocol preparation; literature search and management; manuscript preparation.

Email: 00000032822@student.imu.edu.my

Author 3 - Rachel Wen Qian Kok - Protocol preparation; literature search and management; manuscript preparation.

Email: 00000034150@student.imu.edu.my

Author 4 - Jia Yan Lee - Protocol preparation; literature search and management; manuscript preparation.

Email: 00000037354@student.imu.edu.my

Author 5 - Mabelle King Xuen Ting - Protocol preparation; literature search and management; manuscript preparation.

Email: 00000034273@student.imu.edu.my

Author 6 - Kai Lin Lee - Protocol preparation; literature search and management; manuscript preparation.

Email: 00000033445@student.imu.edu.my