

Foreword

Six years have elapsed since the publication of the previous edition of the Spanish Guideline on the Management of Asthma (Guía Española para el Manejo del Asma, GEMA). Over this period, a number of conceptual and therapeutic aspects emerged that needed to be updated. Given the success of the format used in the previous edition (concise and clear writing, straightforward classification of evidence, proposal of robust/weak recommendations and profusion of algorithms and tables)¹, the GEMA Executive Committee decided not to change this approach for this new edition of the guideline. Thus, the present GEMA Guideline is, in part, an update of the state of knowledge about asthma based on the scientific data published in prestigious journals. It includes, however, three new chapters (7. Asthma and COPD; 8. Severe uncontrolled asthma; and 10. Dissemination and implementation plan), the inclusion of which was deemed “mandatory” in any new document given their increasing relevance of these aspects in recent years.

Among other novelties (redesign and new contents of the web www.gemasthma.com; dissemination program through general communication media; use of new communication technologies, etc.), this new GEMA will now be designated as GEMA^{4.0}. Superscript number 4 means that it is the fourth edition of the guide, while the superscript .0 refers to the initial version of successive (telematic) updates or versions that will be performed in the future using this format, such as GEMA^{4.1}, GEMA^{4.2}, and so on. Furthermore, the initiative’s logo has been modernized, now depicting the cross-section of an inflamed bronchus which is in turn overlapping the cross section of two diamonds (or gems) displayed in different rotation angles. In our opinion, the two key concepts of the project are brought together in an imaginative and modern fashion: asthma and clinical practice guideline, GEMA.

This new edition follows to the same “philosophy” of its predecessors, i.e., drawing up a clinical practice guideline on asthma that is addressed to clinical health professionals, highly practical, independent and agreed-on by the highest possible number of experts pertaining to the various Spanish scientific societies involved in the management of asthma. Given this guideline’s scope and the high relevance of the participating professionals, as well as its design and content, this new GEMA^{4.0} is born under the best auspices. Apart

from the experts belonging to the scientific societies and groups that took part in the latest edition (Spanish Society of Pneumology and Thoracic Surgery; Spanish Society of Allergology and Clinical Immunology; Spanish Society of Clinical Immunology, Allergology and Pediatric Asthma; Spanish Society of Family and Community Medicine; Primary Care Respiratory Working Group; Spanish Society of Primary Care Physicians; Spanish Society of General Medicine; Spanish Society of Pediatric Pneumology; and Spanish Society of Otorhinolaryngology), representatives from the Spanish Society of Outpatient and Primary Care Pediatrics, Spanish Society of Clinical Pharmacology, Spanish Society of Emergency Medicine and Emergency Care, Spanish Society of Family and Community Pharmacy, and National Federation of Respiratory Disease Associations have now been incorporated on behalf of the patients. Overall, **101** experts in asthma, and accredited representatives from **15** societies, scientific groups and associations have participated in the drafting and revision of the document. Because of the number of participants and societies contributing to consensus, this new GEMA guideline is the largest ever performed and, most likely, the greatest multidisciplinary consensus ever reached in our geographic environment.

Finally, on behalf of all of the participants in GEMA^{4.0}, we wish to thank the Spanish Pharmaceutical Industry for its invaluable support and patronage that has enabled the drawing-up, edition and dissemination of this guideline. We also wish to acknowledge the highly professional contribution of the staff from Luzán 5 (editing professionals, computer specialists, designers, journalists) throughout the whole editorial process. We expect this new edition of GEMA to obtain at least the same recognition as the previous ones, as well as a widespread dissemination and impact among healthcare professionals involved in asthma care. We also expect it to enhance their education on asthma which in turn will be associated with a better quality in the care of asthma patients.

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On behalf of the coordinators,
authors and reviewers of GEMA^{4.0}