

Supplementary Table 1: Clinical characteristics of participants with asthma

Number of subjects	271
Sex, male, n (%)	117 (43.2)
Age, years, mean (range)	56.2 (19.0 – 86.0)
Atopic, n (%)	192 (73.3), N=262
Ex-Smoker, n (%)	100 (37.0)
Pack years, median (q1,q3)	7.5 (1.5, 25.0)
FEV₁ % predicted, mean (SD)	79.0 (19.0)
FEV₁/FVC, %, mean (SD)	70.2 (10.6)
Prescribed inhaled corticosteroids (ICS), n (%)	209 (77.1)
[†]ICS dose (µg/day), median (q1,q3)	1000 (800, 2000)
Sputum cell counts, median (q1,q3)	
Total cell number, x10⁶ cells/ml	3.6 (2.0, 6.9) (n=268)
Viability, %	81.0 (67.6, 90.0)
Neutrophils, %	41.2 (27.2, 64.2)
*Neutrophil, x10⁴/ml	133.0 (54.8, 318.7)
Eosinophils, %	1.2 (0.5, 6.2)
*Eosinophil, x10⁴/ml	5.4 (1.1, 24.9)
Macrophages, %	45.5 (26.2, 62.2)
*Macrophage, x10⁴/ml	156.7 (85.3, 257.3)
Lymphocytes, %	0.5 (0.2, 1.5)
*Lymphocyte, x10⁴/ml	2.2 (0.1, 5.9)
Columnar epithelial cells, %	1.2 (0.2, 4.5)
*Columnar epithelial cells, x10⁴/ml	4.4 (1.0, 12.0)
Squamous, %	3.4 (1.2, 7.4)
Neutrophilic inflammation with asthma, n (%)	67 (24.7)
CXCL-8 (ng/ml), median (q1, q3)	6.9 (3.4, 18.4); n=103
Sputum culture performed, n (%)	139 (51.3)
Positive culture, n (%)	21 (15.1)
Purulent sputum, n (%)	77 (28.4)
Sputum colour, n (%)	
1	58 (21.4)
2	136 (50.2)
3	68 (25.1)
4	8 (2.9)
5	1 (0.4)

*cell numbers represent data from 268 patients where a total cell count was available. Three participants had a sample volume too low for cell dispersion and a cell differential was prepared from cell smears.

[†]ICS dose is calculated as beclomethasone equivalents, where 1µg of beclomethasone = 1 µg budesonide = 0.5 µg fluticasone.

FEV₁= forced expiratory volume in 1 second; FVC= forced vital capacity; ICS= inhaled corticosteroids; n= number of participants; SD= standard deviation; q= quartile