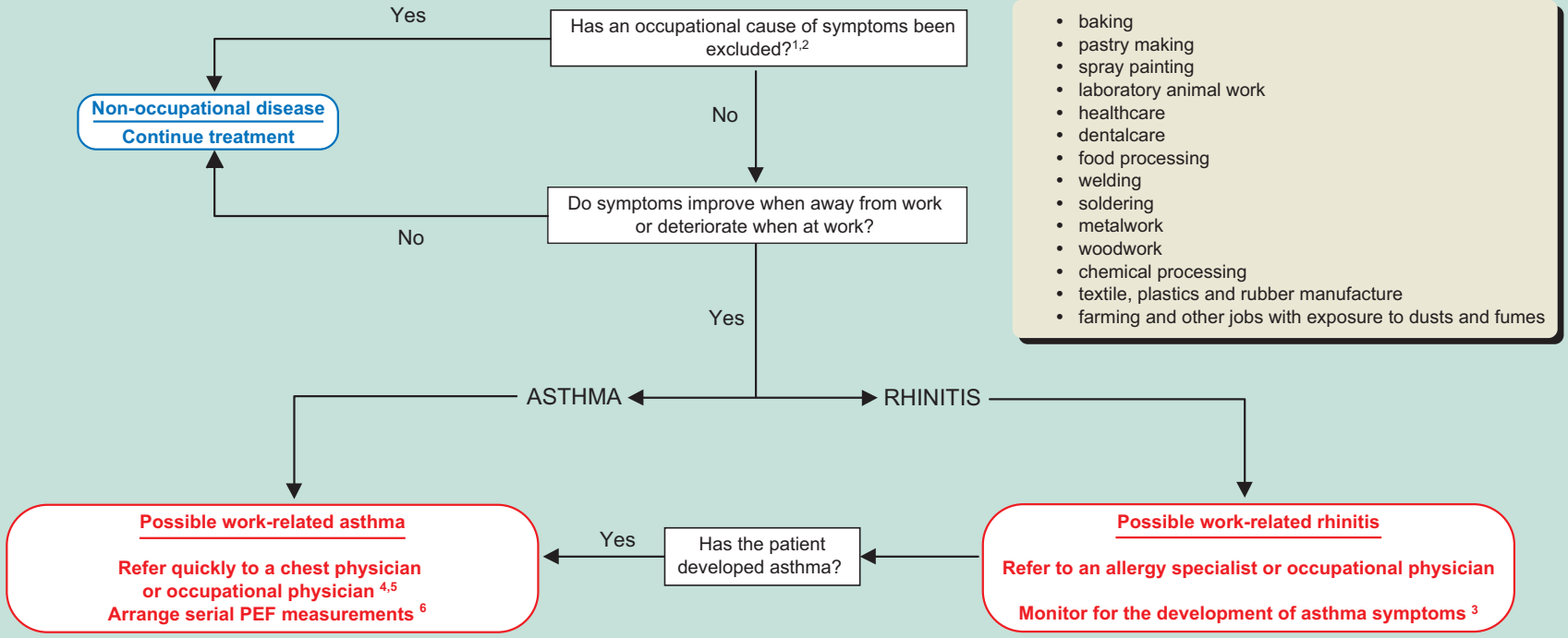
WORK-RELATED ASTHMA AND RHINITIS: CASE FINDING AND MANAGEMENT IN PRIMARY CARE



High risk work[2] includes:

- baking
- pastry making
- spray painting
- laboratory animal work
- healthcare
- dentalcare
- food processing
- welding
- soldering
- metalwork
- woodwork
- chemical processing
- textile, plastics and rubber manufacture
- farming and other jobs with exposure to dusts and fumes

1. At least 1 in 10 cases of new or reappearance of childhood asthma in adult life are attributable to occupation.
2. Enquire of adult patients with rhinitis or asthma about their job and the materials with which they work.
3. Rhino-conjunctivitis may precede IgE-associated occupational asthma; the risk of developing asthma being highest in the year after the onset of rhinitis.
4. The prognosis of occupational asthma is improved by early identification and early avoidance of further exposure to its cause
5. Confirm a diagnosis supported by objective criteria and not on the basis of a compatible history alone because of the potential implications for employment.
6. Arrange for workers whom you suspect of having work-related asthma to perform serial peak flow measurements at least four times a day.

Guidelines for the Identification, Management and Prevention of Occupational Asthma • www.bohrf.org.uk/content/asthma.htm

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