Use of beta-hydroxy-beta-methylbutyrate to treat asthma

Disclosed are methods of treating an individual having asthma wherein the method comprises administering to the individual an amount of β-hydroxy-β-methylbutyrate (HMB) effective to modulate or otherwise cause an increase in the ratio of type (1) to type (2) cytokines, including an increase in the ratio of type (1) to type (2) cytokines without a corresponding increase in type (2) cytokine levels. The methods of the present invention are based upon the discovery that HMB modulates cytokine production, most typically by increasing type (1) cytokines without a corresponding increase in type (2) cytokines.