

Discussion Guide and Asthma Action Plan

Take this with you to your child's next appointment

This guide will help remind you of issues you would like to discuss with the doctor in order to develop an asthma action plan.

Before the visit

Take a look at these helpful tips then complete the asthma symptom chart below to help you report your child's asthma symptoms to their doctor.

- Take time to think about what issues or questions are most important to you, and plan to talk about those first.
- Do your research. If your child is having a specific health problem, or you would like to learn more about other treatments or medicines, find out all you can before the visit. It will help you get the answers to your specific questions.
- Prepare answers to some of the things your child's doctor may want to talk about: your child's breathing symptoms, his or her response to treatment, what you may know about your child's triggers, etc.

Here Are Some Common Triggers to Keep in Mind

Allergens

- Grass/tree/weed pollens
- Food or food additives
(like preservatives used in salad bars)
- Airborne mold
- Animal dander and saliva
- Dust mites
- Cockroach droppings

Irritants

- Strong odors/perfumes
- Cigarette smoke
- Fumes from gas stove or fireplace
- Wood/fireplace smoke
- Aerosol sprays

Other Triggers

- Colds or viral infections
- Reflux disease/heartburn
- Exercise
- Medications
- Prolonged laughing or crying
- Cold air
- Emotional distress

Additional Triggers

My child's asthma symptoms

Changes Since Your Child's Last Doctor Visit	More Often	About the Same	Less Often
Coughing			
Wheezing			
Rapid breathing/shortness of breath			
Tightness in chest/complains of chest hurting			
Fatigue			
Sluggishness; avoids strenuous play			
Restlessness during sleep			
Unusual paleness			
Sweating or anxiety			
Using a quick-relief bronchodilator medicine*			
Missed days at daycare/preschool/school			

* If your child is using a quick-relief bronchodilator medicine more than 2 to 3 times a week, then his or her asthma may not be as controlled as you think.

Have there been any times when your child's asthma symptoms were a lot worse than usual? Yes No

Do your child's asthma symptoms seem to be worse during the day, night, or when playing?

Check all that apply: Day Night During play

How many days in the past week have you given your child, or thought about giving your child, his or her inhaled rescue (quick-relief bronchodilator) medicine?

My child's asthma triggers

List any triggers you are aware of that may be causing your child's asthma symptoms.

During the visit

Prepare a list of questions or concerns you want to talk about. Here is a list to get you started.

Should I be concerned about my child's asthma symptoms?

Should I watch for any particular asthma symptoms?

What triggers should I help my child avoid?

What kind of changes do I need to make to my child's home and school/day care environment?

Should my child be taking an inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) controller medicine?

What are the benefits of a controller medicine and how long will he or she need it?

How soon after starting on a new medication should my child's asthma symptoms improve?

How often should I give my child his or her medicine?

List additional questions you might have:

During the visit

- Make sure you understand all of your doctor's answers and explanations. If you don't, keep asking questions of the doctor or staff until you do understand.
- Take notes to help you understand or remember.
- Let your child's doctor know what is and isn't working with your child's asthma treatment plan.
- Discuss any medication concerns you have with your child's doctor (side effects, advice from family and friends, etc.).
- Ask your child's doctor or nurse for any printed handouts or written instructions he or she may have.

After the visit

- Review your notes and any written information you were given. If you have any questions, call your child's doctor's office. Make sure you understand exactly what you are supposed to do.
- Continue to talk with your child's doctor as new issues come up, or if your child develops new breathing symptoms.
- If you feel too rushed during a regular office visit or phone call to get all the answers you need, think about making an appointment with your child's doctor just to discuss your concerns. Or, ask if he or she can call you back at the end of office hours.

Asthma Action Plan*



Having a plan is a great way to help keep your child's asthma under control.
Use medicines as prescribed.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Breathing is easy
- No coughing or wheezing
- Sleeping through the night
- Wants to eat and play
- Normal (or good) energy level
- Playful and happy

Peak flow above _____

Medicine	How Much to Take	When To Take It
For asthma with exercise, take		
COMMENTS:		

CAUTION

Continue daily prescribed medicines and add quick-relief bronchodilator medicine as instructed by the doctor.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- First sign of a cold or viral infection/flu
- Exposure to known triggers
- Cough and/or mild wheezing
- Complaining of tight chest
- Coughing at night or nighttime awakening from breathing problems
- Irritable and tired

Peak flow from ___ to ___

Medicine	How Much to Take	When To Take It
COMMENTS:		

DANGER

Give these medicines as prescribed and call your doctor right away.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Medicine is NOT helping
- Breathing is hard and fast
- Nose opens wide as child breathes
- Ribs show as child inhales
- Lips and/or fingernails are blue
- Trouble walking and talking
- Muscles of stomach are used when breathing

Peak flow below _____

Emergency Medicine	How Much to Take	When To Take It
COMMENTS:		

Created for: _____
 Phone: _____
 Parent/Caregiver: _____
 Emergency Contact: _____

Created by: _____
 Effective Date of Plan: _____
 Phone: _____
 Phone: _____

*Asthma Action Plan is to be used as a reference only. It is not to be used in place of a consultation with a physician.
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