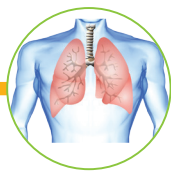
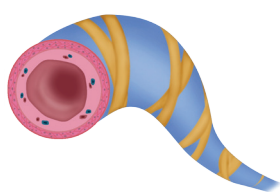


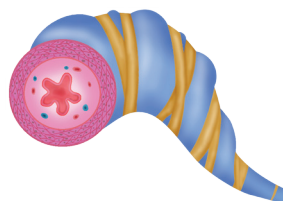
HOW TO CONTROL ASTHMA



Asthma is a long term illness of the lungs that causes the airways to become inflamed and produce lots of mucus. Viral infections, cold air, allergens, exercise, and smoke make the airways “twitchy”; they close easily causing asthma attacks with coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath (see what is asthma). Between attacks the airways are inflamed (see what is an allergy).



NORMAL BRONCHUS



ASTHMA BRONCHUS

What is asthma control?

Asthma is a long-term disease that has no cure. But asthma can be completely controlled so that

- You have no chronic and troublesome symptoms, such as coughing and shortness of breath
- You are not using quick-relief medicines regularly
- You have good lung function
- You can do all normal activities and sleep through the night
- You have NO asthma attacks with emergency room visits or hospital stays

Record Your Symptoms

You can record your asthma symptoms in a diary to see how well your treatments are controlling your asthma. (see asthma diary).

Asthma is well controlled if:

- You have symptoms no more than 2 days a week, and these symptoms don't wake you from sleep more than 1 or 2 nights a month.
- You can do all your normal activities.
- You take quick-relief medicines no more than 2 days a week.
- You have no more than one asthma attack a year that requires you to take corticosteroids by mouth.
- Your peak flow doesn't drop below 80 percent of your personal best number.

HOW TO CONTROL ASTHMA

Partner with your doctor to control/manage your or your child's asthma. Learn about the medications, how they work, the best techniques and to how to use them with the greatest effect. Children aged 10 or older, and younger children who are able, should take an active role in their asthma care

Asthma Medications

Medications are one of the most important ways to prevent or treat asthma symptoms. There are two types of asthma medications: controller medications and quick relief (rescue/reliever) medications. Although many people think their reliever medication is the most important (because they make them feel better when they are having an attack), actually the controller medications are even more important. This is because if you use your controller medication every day with the technique your doctor shows you, you should not even have any attacks at all!

Bring all your pumps and medicines with you to your every visit so your doctor, nurse or pharmacist can explain to you what type of medicine it is, and check whether your technique in using it is good enough.

Controller Medications

Controller medications work slowly over weeks to months to reduce the airway swelling and inflammation and help prevent asthma symptoms from occurring in the first place.

Controller medications:

- Prevent asthma symptoms from occurring and reduce and/or prevent:
 - Inflammation and scarring in the airways.
 - Tightening of the muscle bands around the airways (bronchospasm).
- Will not provide quick relief of asthma symptoms.
- Do not show immediate results, but work slowly over time.
- Should be taken daily, even when you are not having symptoms.

HOW TO CONTROL ASTHMA

Quick-Relief (Rescue or Reliever) Medications

Rescue/reliever medications are fast-acting medications used to relieve asthma symptoms within five to 20 minutes. They should be used whenever you have asthma symptoms. These types of medicines are usually inhaled directly into the lungs through an inhaler or a nebulizer. Although these are very popular medicines used to open up your chest and allow you to feel better, they do not deal with the inflammation that is causing the symptoms. The controller pump is actually more important.

Rescue/reliever medications:

- Relieve asthma symptoms once they have started.
- Are fast-acting (start working in five to 20 minutes).
- Do not control or prevent inflammation in the airways.
- Relax the tightened muscle bands around the airways (bronchospasm).
- Should only be needed occasionally. Talk to your doctor if you find you are using quick-relief medications more than twice a week to control your breathing.

What is an action plan?

An action plan tells you exactly how to monitor your asthma control and what you should do if your asthma is

- 1) In the green ... Well controlled: Use your normal medication
- 2) Orange ... not controlled: Use relievers and see your doctor
- 3) Red ... Red alert: Use relievers and see a doctor immediately

ASTHMA ACTION PLAN FOR:

Name: _____

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http://www.allergyfoundation.co.za

Asthma sufferers can:

- Have NO Symptoms
- Have a normal lifestyle, play sport and sleep well.
- Have as few acute attacks as possible
- Miss little or no school and work
- Have your best possible peak flow

• Take your controller medication every day whether you feel well or unwell.

• Visit the Doctor (Asthma Clinic) twice a year even if asthma is well controlled.

• Take your medication/pumps/spacers with you to every doctor's/nurses visit.

• Take this plan to each visit so it can be updated.

• Take your asthma diary to each visit.

Doctor's Phone No: _____

Hospital Phone No: _____

Date: _____

Normal Peak flow _____

Best Peak flow _____

GREEN ZONE - GO

This is where you want to be most of the time. Your asthma is under control when:

- No cough or wheeze
- Can play games and sport normally
- No sleep disturbance
- Using reliever less than 3 times a week

AND Peak flows are greater than 80%

ACTION: TAKE NORMAL MEDICINES

1. Controller
Strength: _____
Your device is _____
Take _____ puffs _____ every day

2. Other Medicines
Medicine: _____
Dose: _____
When: _____

3. Reliever
Device: _____
Take _____ puffs as required
And if necessary take _____ puffs 10-15 minutes before sport or activity

ORANGE ZONE - CAUTION

Your asthma is not under control/getting worse when:

- Cough, wheeze or tight chest
- Waking at night with asthma symptoms
- Need to use the reliever inhaler more than 3 times a week
- Problems playing or doing sport

OR Peak flow recordings are between (50%) and (80%)

ACTION

Increase the reliever inhaler to _____ puffs four times per day until you are back in the green zone.

Continue to take your controller inhaler as normal to prevent your symptoms.

Other action: _____

if there is no improvement, medication may need to be changed, so make an appointment to see your Doctor or Asthma Nurse.

Follow the advice in this plan and fill in a symptom and medication diary every day, and take it with you to the Dr or Asthma Nurse.

RED ZONE - RED ALERT!

Your asthma is critical/dangerous when:

- Breathing is hard and fast
- Can't talk easily or feed easily
- Severe shortness of breath
- The reliever pump is not helping

OR Peak flow is below 50%

Follow the Red Zone Action and see a doctor immediately or go to the closest emergency room.

ACTION

Call an ambulance or go to the doctor NOW, even if symptoms get better!

Take 1 dose/puff of reliever every minute for 10 minutes. Use a spacer if you have one. **Repeat this** if there is no improvement, as often as you need.

While waiting: Give one puff of reliever every minute for 10 minutes using a spacer if you have one.

- If you have steroid tablets or syrup give them now. Your dose is _____
- Keep calm.
- Sit up to help breathe and loosen clothing.

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HOW TO CONTROL ASTHMA

Signs That Your Asthma Is Getting Worse (see action plan)

Your asthma might be getting worse if:

- Your symptoms start to occur more often, are more severe, or bother you at night and cause you to lose sleep.
- You're limiting your normal activities and missing school or work because of your asthma.
- Your peak flow (see peak flow tests) is low compared to your personal best or varies a lot from day to day.
- Your asthma medicines don't seem to work well anymore.
- You have to use your quick-relief inhaler more often. If you're using quick-relief medicine 3 or more days a week, your asthma isn't well controlled.
- You have to go to the emergency room or doctor because of an asthma attack.

If you have any of these signs, see your doctor. He or she might need to change your medicines or take other steps to control your asthma.

Remember

Take your medicines as directed by your doctor, and you:

- May have more days without asthma symptoms
- Won't use quick-relief medications as often.
- Will have fewer symptoms at night
- Will breathe better
- May avoid permanent lung function changes/damage.



A medical specialist with a special interest and skill in allergy might be able to help. See the list of health professionals with skills in allergy on the AFSA website.