



Urgent care

# Asthma guidance for children

## What is asthma?

Asthma is a condition that affects the airways, the tubes that carry air in and out of your lungs. If you have asthma, the airways are more sensitive than normal. When you come into contact with a 'trigger' your airways become inflamed and narrow, the muscle around them tighten and there is an increase in the production of sticky mucus (phlegm).

**Common triggers:** house dust, chest infections, pollen, animal fur, tobacco smoke, cold air and exercise.

**Asthma symptoms:** wheezing, coughing, breathlessness and difficulty breathing.

Agreeing an asthma plan with your doctor or nurse is an important step towards keeping your asthma symptoms under control.

### What you can do:

- Make sure you take your treatments as directed in this leaflet (see inside back cover)
- See your doctor or nurse if symptoms get worse or do not improve.

Recommended website for more information:

[www.asthma.org.uk](http://www.asthma.org.uk)

# Asthma in children

Asthma symptoms vary. You may find that your child:

- wheezes or coughs, particularly during the night, after exercise or with a cold (although not all children with asthma wheeze).
- has a cough that will not go away, or keeps coming back.
- feels breathless and finds it difficult to breathe.
- complains of a tight feeling in their chest or has a sore tummy.
- feels tired and does not run around as normal or wants to be carried more.

## Asthma treatments

### **Relievers (usually blue in colour)**

Every child with asthma should have a blue inhaler to relieve symptoms. It works by relaxing the muscles around the airways, making it easier to breathe. If your child needs to use their reliever more than once in any day or 3-4 times a week, then they will also need a preventer inhaler.

### **Preventers (usually brown, red or orange)**

Preventers control the swelling and inflammation in the airways. They stop the airways being so sensitive to triggers. This protective effect builds up over a period of time. It is important that the preventer inhaler is taken every day, even when well.

## Oral steroids

These soluble tablets, usually Prednisolone, are sometimes required to treat asthma. Short courses of oral steroids are safe.

## What you can do:

- Make sure your child takes their treatments as directed in this leaflet
- If symptoms get worse or do not improve take your child to their doctor or nurse
- Agreeing an asthma plan with your Doctor or nurse is an important step towards

## Asthma attacks in children

If your child has an asthma attack it is an **emergency** and any one of the following may happen. Your child may:

- breathe faster
- make more effort to breathe using 'tummy muscles' or sucking in the spaces in between ribs or under the breast bone
- cough or wheeze excessively
- be too breathless to speak, babble or feed
- the reliever (blue inhaler) does not help

## What you must do

- Give your child their reliever (blue inhaler) immediately.
- Call your doctor, the out-of-hours service or for an ambulance if not better after five minutes.
- Continue to give their reliever (blue inhaler) every five minutes if required (you cannot overdose on a reliever).

## **Ring 999** if your child becomes

- very drowsy or difficult to wake up
- very pale or blue/grey around the lips
- exhausted
- very agitated or anxious, and
- the blue inhaler is not helping

**Whilst waiting for the ambulance, give one puff of the blue inhaler every 30 seconds - up to 10 puffs.**



## Concerns and complaints

We aim to provide you with a high quality service at all times. However, if you have any concerns, complaints or comments about your experience of our service then please tell a member of the team or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on freephone 0800 328 7971.

# Asthma treatment plan

Patient's name: .....

date: .....

Your treatment plan is:

When to use

How much

Reliever .....

Preventer.....

Other.....

**Your child must see your GP or practice nurse within the next 48 hours,**

*If this falls at a weekend or on a bank holiday, call the out-of-hours GP Service on 111 and ask for an appointment with a doctor or nurse for a review.*

Notes

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If you need the information in another language or format please ask us

Nëse ky informacion ju nevojitet në një gjuhë apo format tjetër, ju lutem na kontaktoni

আপনি যদি এই তথ্যাদি অন্য কোন ভাষায় বা মাধ্যমে (ফরমেট) পেতে চান তবে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন

જો તમને આ માહિતી બીજી ભાષામાં અથવા બીજા આકારમાં જોઈએ, તો કૃપા કરીને અમને પૂછો

यदि आपको यह जानकारी किसी दूसरी भाषा या आकार में चाहिए हो तो कृपया हम से पूछें

若您需要本信息的另一种语言或格式的文本，请与我们联系

नेवेल तुरातुं छिट नानकाली विनी दुमि ब्रामा नं मवल दिंस चाठीसी ठेदे उं विवथा वव वे मरुं पुहे

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دوسری زبان میں یا کسی دوسرے طریقے سے درکار ہوں تو براہ مہربانی ہم سے پوچھیں۔۔۔

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Urgent care is provided by our Older People Directorate.

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