

What is asthma?

Asthma is a condition that affects the airways of the lungs. It can lead to the airways getting narrower; this makes it hard for the person to breathe.





households in the UK
has a person living with asthma

(www.wellatschool.org/medical-conditions/asthma)

This is about 3 pupils in every class!



How is asthma diagnosed and treated?

A doctor or asthma nurse will diagnose someone with asthma. They may prescribe medicine (usually an inhaler and spacer) and give an asthma plan to the patient.



Inhalers should be taken with a spacer as this will enable more of the medicine to get to the lungs.

What is an asthma plan?

An asthma plan tells a person what medicines (inhalers) to take every day when they are well, and also what medicines (inhalers) to take when they have asthma symptoms or an asthma attack.

asthma UK My Asthma Plan

Your asthma plan tells you when to take your asthma medicines.

And what to do when your asthma gets worse.

Name: _____

1. My daily asthma medicines

- My preventer inhaler is called _____ and its colour is _____
- I take _____ puff/s of my preventer inhaler in the morning and _____ puff/s at night. I do this every day even if I feel well.
- Other asthma medicines I take every day: _____
- My reliever inhaler is called _____ and its colour is _____. I take _____ puff/s of my reliever inhaler (usually blue) when I wheeze or cough, my chest hurts or it's hard to breathe.
- My best peak flow is _____

Does doing sport make it hard to breathe? **If YES** I take: _____ puff/s of my reliever inhaler (usually blue) beforehand.

2. When my asthma gets worse

I'll know my asthma is getting worse if:

- I wheeze or cough, my chest hurts or it's hard to breathe, or
- I'm waking up at night because of my asthma, or
- I'm taking my reliever inhaler (usually blue) more than three times a week, or
- My peak flow is less than _____

If my asthma gets worse, I should:

Keep taking my preventer medicines as normal.

I also take _____ puff/s of my reliever inhaler (usually blue) every four hours.

If I'm not getting any better doing this I should see my doctor or asthma nurse today.

Remember to use my inhaler with a spacer (if I have one)

Health & care information you can trust

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asthma UK My Asthma Plan

3. When I have an asthma attack

I'm having an asthma attack if:

- My reliever inhaler (usually blue) isn't helping, or
- I can't talk or walk easily, or
- I'm breathing hard and fast, or
- I'm coughing or wheezing a lot, or
- My peak flow is less than _____

When I have an asthma attack, I should:

Sit up – don't lie down. Try to be calm.

Take one puff of my reliever inhaler every 30 to 60 seconds up to a total of 10 puffs.

Even if I start to feel better, I don't want this to happen again, so I need to see my doctor or asthma nurse today.

If I still don't feel better and I've taken ten puffs, I need to call 999 straight away. If I am waiting longer than 15 minutes for an ambulance I should take another _____ puff/s of my reliever inhaler (usually blue) every 30 to 60 seconds (up to 10 puffs).

My asthma triggers (things that make my asthma worse)

Make sure you have your reliever inhaler (usually blue) with you. You might need it if you come into contact with things that make your asthma worse.

I need to see my asthma nurse every six months

Date I got my asthma plan: _____

Date of my next asthma review: _____

Doctor/asthma nurse contact details: _____

Parents – get the most from your child's action plan

Make it easy for you and your family to find it when you need it

- Take a photo and keep it on your mobile (and your child's mobile if they have one)
- Stick a copy on your fridge door
- Share your child's action plan with school, grandparents and babysitter (a printout or a photo).

You and your parents can get your questions answered:

Call Asthma UK's Friendly Helpline
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
0300 222 5800
Get information at www.asthma.org.uk

What does the brown inhaler do?



The brown inhaler is the preventer. It should be used every day to help prevent asthma attacks.

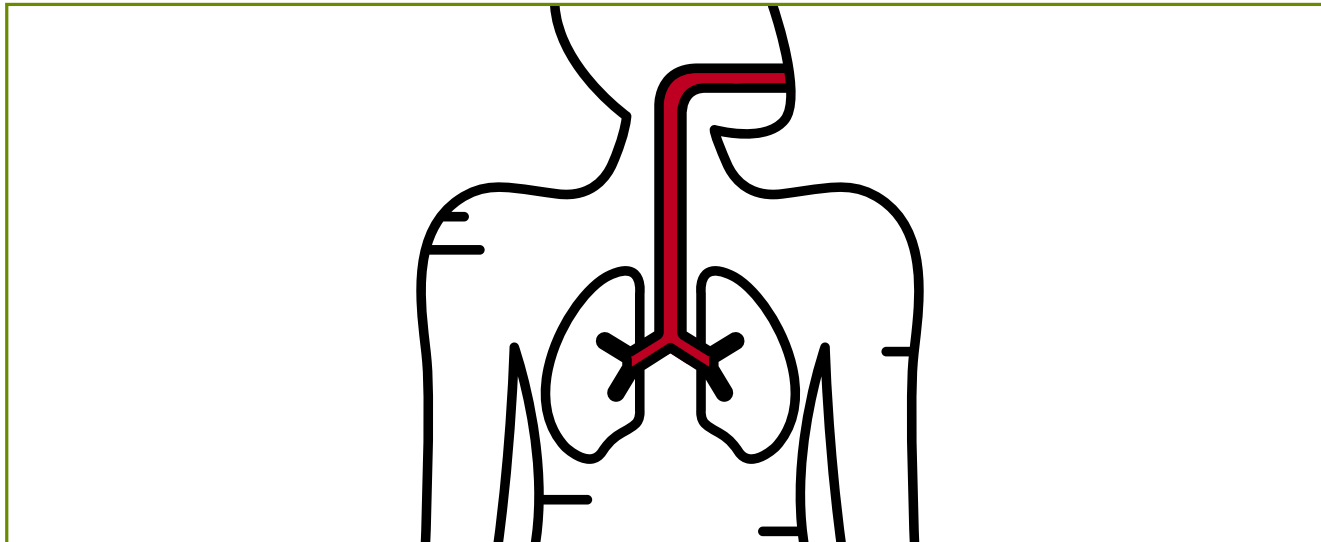
What does the blue inhaler do?



The blue inhaler is the reliever. It helps to stop symptoms of asthma immediately.

It needs to be used if a person is having an asthma attack or having asthma symptoms.

What is an asthma attack?



An asthma attack is when the airways in the lungs become inflamed and swollen, and the muscles around the airways tighten. The narrow tubes in the lungs become even narrower than usual. There is also some mucous (phlegm) produced in the airways which can cause coughing.

What does an asthma attack look like?



When a person has an asthma attack they might:

- cough
- wheeze – sounds like a whistling sound
- become short of breath – sounds like gasping for air
- have tightening around the chest – feel very full
- have a change of skin colour – go very pale or tinged with blue

What can trigger an asthma attack?



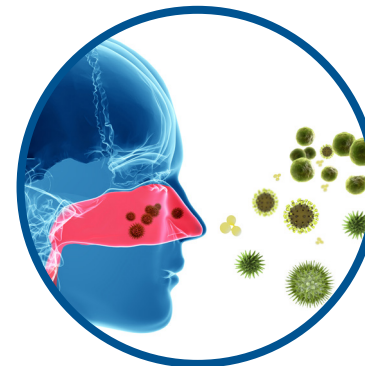
smoke from cigarettes



dust



furry animals (such as cats and dogs)



pollen (from trees or grass)



moulds and spores (damp, poorly ventilated housing)



weather/temperature changes



energetic physical activity or physical actions such as laughing or crying



illnesses such as colds or flu



emotions such as worry or stress

What to do if someone has an asthma attack

- tell a trusted adult immediately
- the person should use the blue reliever inhaler and spacer immediately (1 or 2 puffs)
- the person should sit down and take slow, steady breaths
- people around them should stay calm and give them space – do not crowd round them
- if the person does not feel better they can use the blue reliever inhaler again (2 puffs of the inhaler every 2 minutes – up to 10 puffs)
- if the person does not feel better after taking the inhaler, or if you are worried, it is best to call 999 and ask for an ambulance

Where people can get help, support and advice



Speak to
the school nurse



Contact your GP
or doctor



www.asthma.org.uk



Telephone:
0800 121 62 64
to speak to an
asthma nurse