

Me and My Asthma

Instructions to ECE providers: Fill out this form with the parents or guardians of each child with asthma

(1) Child's

Name:.....
.....

(2)My child's early warning signs of asthma attack are: (examples: cough, wheeze).....
.....

(3)My child's emergency warning signs of asthma attack are: (trouble walking, talking).....
.....

(4) My child's asthma triggers are: (examples: dogs, dust, colds).....
.....

(5)You can help my child feel better by: (examples: giving appropriate asthma medications, sitting him/her down, rubbing his/her back, staying calm).....
.....

(6) If my child's asthma episode gets worse please do the following:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Emergency Contacts

Family member:.....

Phone:.....**Work:**.....

Doctor:..... **Phone:**.....

The nearest emergency room is:.....

Address:.....

Phone:.....

My Child's Medication

| Name of medication | When to take it | When to take it | Medication expiration |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|

Important!

- Have parents demonstrate how to use medications and devices
- Watch the DVD on how to use asthma devices
- Obtain copy of written instructions and Child Asthma Plan from parents or health care provider

(Adapted from American Lung Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties)

What Happens When Asthma Is Triggered?

(Information Culled from ‘Creating Asthma Friendly Schools’)

When asthma is triggered, a sudden narrowing of the airways can produce what is often called an “asthma attack” or “asthma exacerbation.” Sometimes the exacerbation or attack can take several hours to happen because of the time it takes for the airway inflammation or swelling to happen. The underlying level of airway inflammation predicts how “twitchy” or reactive the airways will be to the triggers. Ongoing and sustained exposure to the student’s asthma triggers lead to more severe asthma and more frequent symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, wheezing and coughing. Medication can relieve and help prevent these symptoms. Reducing or eliminating exposure to triggers can help to prevent an attack.

Asthma Control is Key

When asthma is well controlled, the student will have infrequent symptoms and minimal to no disruption in his or her life. The level of asthma control has to do with the degree of inflammation in the airways. When the airways are very inflamed, they are irritable, more twitchy and will react by narrowing to more triggers with less exposure. The poorer the asthma control, the more inflamed the airways thus, the more asthma symptoms are experienced.

Asthma is **well controlled** when:

- asthma symptoms are experienced fewer than four times in a week;
 - the reliever medication (usually a blue inhaler) is used less than four times in a week;
 - physical activity or play are unrestricted with no asthma symptoms experienced;
 - sleep is uninterrupted with no awakenings due to asthma; and
- no asthma attacks occur.

Signs that asthma is poorly controlled include:

- having asthma symptoms (e.g., cough, trouble breathing, wheezing) four or more times a week;
- using the reliever inhaler four or more times a week to treat symptoms;
- waking up at night or in the early morning due to asthma symptoms (once a week is too much);
- trouble playing or being physically active because of asthma symptoms;
- missing school due to asthma; and
- having asthma attacks or exacerbations.

If you are concerned about a student's level of asthma control, because you have observed these signs, talk to the student (if age-appropriate) and the parents/guardians and let them know what you are observing.

Asthma Medications

Asthma medicines don't cure asthma. They do help prevent and relieve asthma symptoms. The two main types of asthma medications are relievers and controllers. Both are important but work in different ways to control asthma.

Relievers (usually blue)

- work quickly (five to ten minutes) by relaxing the muscles that wrap around the airways to open up the airways and give quick relief from asthma symptoms;
- are used when needed to relieve asthma symptoms and as a result must always be quickly accessible in case of asthma emergencies; and

- provide relief from symptoms for four to six hours.

Very young students with asthma will require adult assistance to administer their medication. With proper instruction, most students in grade 2 (seven years or older) have the ability to understand when their medication is needed and how to use it correctly. For asthma medications that involve a spray inhaler (i.e., metered dose inhaler), it is recommended that a spacer be attached to the inhaler to ensure good delivery of medication to the lungs and to make it easier to administer the medication. A life-threatening asthma attack can occur at any time, and it is extremely important for those with asthma to have easy access to their reliever inhaler (usually blue).

Sample of Relievers and Reliever with Spacer





Controllers (usually orange, purple, brown or red)

reduce and prevent inflammation and slow the production of mucus in the airways;

are not used in asthma emergencies because they do not open the airways quickly enough; and

are typically taken twice each day (morning and night) and are therefore not usually needed at school but used on a daily basis at home.

Sample of Controller Medications





Individual Student Asthma Management Plan Form

Visit www.on.lung.ca to access an AODA-compliant version or to order free copies of The Lung Association - Ontario's *Individual Student Asthma Management Plan* form.

Place Student Photo Here School Board Logo

Student NameDate of Birth Age.....
Grade.....

Teacher **Emergency Contacts** (list in priority of contact):

.....
.....
.....
.....

KNOWN ASTHMA TRIGGERS _ Colds/flu/illness _ Physical activity/exercise _ Pet dander _ Cigarette smoke _ Pollen _ Mould _ Dust _ Cold weather _ Strong smells _ Allergies (specify): _ Anaphylaxis (specify allergy): _ Other (specify): Asthma trigger avoidance instructions:

RELIEVER INHALER USE AT SCHOOL AND DURING SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES A reliever inhaler is a fast-acting medication (usually blue in colour) that is used when someone is having asthma symptoms. The reliever inhaler should be used: _ When student is experiencing asthma symptoms (e.g., trouble breathing, coughing, wheezing). _ Other (explain):

Use reliever inhaler _____ in the dose of _____. Spacer (valved holding chamber) provided? _ Yes