

What is an Asthma Action Plan?

An Asthma Action Plan is an important written summary of your child's asthma symptoms, medications, dosage and use. It is a good way to share information about your child's asthma with family members, caregivers, neighbors and your child's school or daycare, so that anyone who comes into contact with your child on a regular basis will know how to help your child handle an asthma attack.

You should work with your child's health care provider to create the plan. The information that you enter in the plan is divided into three zones — green, yellow and red — that link the severity of your child's asthma symptoms with the appropriate medications and responses. The plan should include information such as instructions on using a peak flow meter, what to do in case of emergency, the phone numbers of parents, trusted adults and your child's health care provider, as well as any other additional information your child's health care provider believes is necessary.

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For more information about asthma, contact one of the following organizations:

American Lung Association
1-800-LUNGUSA
www.lung.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
1-800-7-ASTHMA
www.aafa.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/asthma/children.htm

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
1-301-592-8573
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

The above constitutes a sampling of organizations that provide information about asthma. Other organizations may be available in your area. We do not recommend or endorse any one organization.

This service is designed to provide you with general health education, information and support in making informed health care decisions. We do not diagnose, provide medical advice, or make treatment recommendations. Please see your benefit plan for a description of covered services. This service is not a substitute for medical care from your doctor. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider for any medical concerns or questions.

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Asthma Action Plan

How To Create and Use It



Using the Asthma Action Plan



Be Proactive With Your Child's School, Daycare and Other Caregivers

Because your child spends a great deal of time in school or daycare, it's important for both you and your child that the school or daycare staff is aware of your child's condition and can react appropriately in case of an asthma attack. Knowing that others are aware of the condition may make it easier for your child to share information about asthma triggers and symptoms with teachers, coaches and caregivers. It will give you peace of mind knowing that others can take the correct steps to help your child if needed.

After completing your child's Asthma Action Plan, visit the school or daycare in advance to:

- Talk to the teachers, school nurse, coaches and caregivers about your child's Asthma Action Plan.
- Give them copies of the plan and review it with them.
- Learn about the policy regarding taking medications during the day.
- Ask if your child can carry an inhaler.
- See what can be done to remove asthma triggers, such as dust, pets and strong odors.
- Discuss how your child can take part in physical education class, recess and field trips.
- Create a plan for your child when outdoor air quality is unsafe.
- Find out how your child can make up missed school work due to asthma absences.

If your child is exhibiting asthma symptoms, the Asthma Action Plan provides a quick reference to help your child recover from the attack or get additional help as needed. While the Asthma Action Plan can serve as a reference guide, please call 911 or go to the emergency room in critical or life-threatening situations.

The plan is divided into three zones. Here is what they mean:

Green zone – This means your child is symptom-free and can go to school, play, breathe easily, sleep normally, and have peak flow rates in the green range. To maintain control and stay in the green zone, your child should:

- Take daily control medications as directed.
- Avoid asthma triggers.
- Monitor peak flow.

Yellow zone – This means your child is exhibiting asthma symptoms during the day or waking with symptoms during the night.

Symptoms can include coughing or wheezing, chest tightness, difficulty breathing, being too tired to play, or have a drop in peak flow rates. To take precautions in the yellow zone, your child should:

- Take the quick-relief medication listed in the yellow zone of the action plan.
- Remove the child from a known asthma trigger.
- Continue with medications listed in the green zone as prescribed by the doctor.
- Monitor peak flow.

Red zone – This is an emergency alert that your child needs immediate help. Your child may be short of breath or breathing fast and hard, have trouble walking and talking, have blue fingernails and lips, and is not responding to quick-relief medications. If your child is in the red zone, get help immediately:

- Call 911.
- Go to a hospital emergency room.
- Call the doctor.



Updating Your Plan

Anytime there are changes to your child's treatment, be sure to update your Asthma Action Plan and give new copies to all those who have regular contact with your child. Make sure to discuss the plan with your child.