

Checklist for Adolescents with Asthma

Your guide to breathing easier!



Hi! If you have asthma, you're not alone. This guide is here to help you better understand what asthma is, how to manage it, and how to keep doing all the things you enjoy. Together, we'll explore how your body responds, what can trigger an asthma attack, and the best ways to stay healthy, active, and safe.

What is Asthma?

Imagine that your airways are like pipes. When you have asthma, these pipes can sometimes become narrow and inflamed. This makes breathing more difficult and can cause coughing, wheezing, or a feeling of tightness in the chest.

Common Symptoms

- Coughing (often worse at night or in the morning)
- Wheezing when breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling of tightness in the chest

These symptoms can vary from one person to another and may come and go.

What Can Trigger an Asthma Attack

Several things can make your asthma worse, such as:

- Pollen, dust, or mold
- Cold or dry air
- Physical exercise
- Infections (such as a cold)
- Smoke (tobacco, fires)
- Strong smells or certain chemicals

Your Personalized Action Plan

The most important thing for living well with asthma is having a plan. Your doctor or school nurse can help you create a personalized action plan. This plan will tell you:

- **How to take your medication:** When to use your rescue inhaler and how to take your controller medication if you have one.
- **How to recognize the signs of an asthma attack:** Knowing when your asthma is starting to get worse.
- **What to do during an asthma attack:** The steps to follow to feel better quickly and when to ask for help.

This plan is your best ally for staying active and safe.

Remember: managing your asthma means taking care of yourself. By understanding your body and following your plan, you can continue enjoying life to the fullest!

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Weekly Asthma Check-Up – Monitoring and Preparation

Check my inhalers:	<i>Do I have enough medication left?</i> ☐ Rescue inhaler (Ventolin, Salbutamol, etc.) ☐ Maintenance medication (Corticosteroids, etc.) → <i>Keep a spare emergency inhaler at home</i> Check that the spare inhaler: ☐ Is not out of date ☐ Is still full ☐ Has been stored properly → If the cartridge is almost empty: <i>Tell a parent / Renew the prescription</i> → Useful tip: <i>Write the date you started using the inhaler on the device with a marker pen.</i>
Clean my devices:	☐ Rinse the inhaler mouthpiece with lukewarm water (once a week) ☐ Clean my inhalation chamber (if I use one) ☐ Leave to air dry completely (do not use a hairdryer) ☐ Keep it away from heat and moisture
Update my asthma diary or app	<i>Please note:</i> ☐ Symptoms experienced ☐ Treatment taken ☐ Any asthma attacks ☐ Identify possible triggers ☐ Share this information with parents / carers ➡ Tracking diary or possible apps: <i>AsthmaMD, RespirH@ction, CareClinic, Propeller Health, MyTherapy</i>
Let us know if anything changes	<i>I am speaking to:</i> ● My parents / close relatives ● My school nurse ● My Physical Education teacher or a trusted adult if it happens during an activity ● My doctor if: ■ Asthma symptoms are more frequent, even when I'm not exercising or exposed to the usual triggers ■ My treatment seems less effective than usual ■ I have more than one attack a week ■ I wake up at night because of my asthma ■ I have forgotten to take my long-term treatment several times ■ I am using my reliever inhaler more often than usual

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Recognizing an Asthma Attack – Warning Signs

<i>I know how to spot these signs:</i>	☐ Persistent cough, especially at night ☐ Wheezing (a whistling sound when breathing out) ☐ Chest tightness ☐ Shortness of breath at rest or during moderate exertion ☐ Difficulty speaking or walking ☐ Sudden anxiety or restlessness
<i>I know my asthma:</i>	If I use my rescue inhaler more than twice a week , I should see my doctor.
<i>For lifestyle and prevention:</i>	<i>I exercise in a way that suits me</i> ☐ I warm up before every session, especially in winter or in dry weather. ☐ I use my bronchodilator before exercise if recommended by my doctor. ☐ I stick to my own pace and stop as soon as I feel any discomfort. ☐ I choose an activity I enjoy, even if it's only moderate. ☐ I tell my Physical Education teacher or coach about my asthma. <i>I sleep well to breathe more easily</i> ☐ I get at least 8 hours of sleep each night. ☐ I air my bedroom every day. ☐ I change my bed linen regularly, especially my pillowcases. ☐ I prop my head up if I cough at night. <i>I drink enough water.</i> ☐ I keep a water bottle with me during the day. ☐ Drinking enough water helps maintain good hydration and supports respiratory comfort. <i>I avoid irritants</i> ☐ I don't smoke and I refuse cigarettes, including e-cigarettes. ☐ I ask people not to smoke near me. ☐ I limit my exposure to strong perfumes, sprays, incense, etc. <i>I look after myself every day</i> ☐ I listen to my body. ☐ I manage my stress through activities I enjoy: drawing, music, sport. ☐ I feel proud when I take good care of my asthma.

In the Event of an Asthma Attack – What Should You Do Right Away?

<i>The right steps to take:</i>	☐ I settle down calmly (sitting upright, back straight, shoulders relaxed) ☐ I take to puffs from my rescue inhaler (as prescribed by my doctor) → Using a spacer if necessary → I breathe deeply between each puff. ☐ I wait for 5 to 10 minutes → I remain seated and breathe calmly. → I monitor the signs : Am I breathing more easily? Is the cough subsiding ? ☐ If symptoms persist : → I take another 1 or 2 puffs. → I call an adult or someone I trust. → I show my personalised action plan if I have one. ☐ If I can't breathe, speak or walk, or if my lips turn blue: → I ask someone to call 144 immediately. → I stay seated and keep my inhaler in my mouth.
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After Managing the Asthma Attack

<i>Post-crisis self-assessment:</i>	☐ Do I feel better after 10 minutes ? ☐ Do I still have symptoms ? If so, I need to report them. ☐ I note down what happened in my notebook or app: the time, the symptom, and what I took.
<i>Tell an adult:</i>	☐ Even if I'm feeling better, I'll let my parents or a designated adult (teacher, coach, school nurse) know. ☐ I'll show them my health record or app to share the information.
<i>Checking my medication after the crisis:</i>	☐ Is there still enough left in my emergency inhaler ? ☐ If necessary, I plan to get a new one.
<i>Gradually get back into a normal routine:</i>	☐ I don't resume physical activity straight after the attack. ☐ I wait until I've fully recovered.
<i>Think about triggers:</i>	☐ Do I know why I had this attack ? (Allergen, missed dose, physical exertion, etc. ?) ☐ I'll discuss this with a healthcare professional so I can be better prepared next time.
<i>Tailoring my care plan with a professional:</i>	☐ If I have had more than one asthma attack this week, or if my asthma attack are becoming more frequent, I will contact my GP or nurse. ☐ I will review my personalised action plan if necessary.

My Asthma Essentials

Make sure my asthma kit includes (school bag / sports bag / day-out bag) **with:**

- ☐ Emergency inhaler
- ☐ Inhalation chamber
- ☐ Copy of my personalised action plan
- ☐ Prescription

Carry an emergency contact card with me:

Name : _____
Address : _____
General practitioner : _____
Known allergies : _____
Intolerances : _____
Other : _____

Know my personalised asthma action plan: (provided by the HUG)

What should I do in the green, yellow, orange and red zones ?

Your maintenance treatment

This is taken daily and improves your quality of life.

My treatment is: _____

- Mild cough
- Slightly short of breath
- Some wheezing
- Occasional breathlessness and night-time cough

I continue my maintenance treatment.

And I take _____ if needed.

- Severe cough
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling of tightness in the chest
- Frequent coughing and shortness of breath at night

I am continuing my long-term treatment.

I take _____ as needed and

I add _____ if necessary.

- Severe breathing difficulty
- Very severe cough
- Shortness of breath at rest
- Difficulty speaking

EMERGENCY! Go to the emergency department or call 144 immediately.

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Explain to a trusted adult (teacher, coach, friend) what to do if I have an asthma attack.

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Contacts

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