



## Caring for Your Child with Asthma

Asthma is a common illness in children. An 'asthma attack' makes your child's breathing tubes narrow and fills them with sticky mucous. An 'asthma attack' can be a scary experience, but the right medications can help your child stay safe.

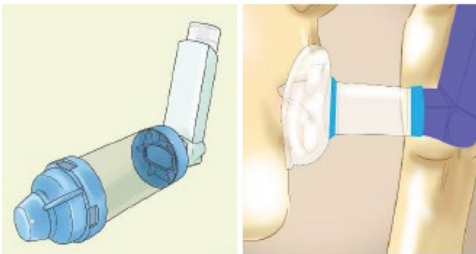
### How to Care for Yourself at Home

+ Firstly, please use the medicines the doctor gave you. You may have one OR two medicines:

- A **controller medicine** (ORANGE, RED, or BROWN in colour). This medicine helps to keep your child's breathing healthy, day-to-day.

- A **rescue medicine** (BLUE in colour). This medicine can help if your child is having trouble breathing, or if they are having an asthma attack.

It's very important to use the spacers that come with your child's medicine. There are different types, but some common ones look like this:



+ Make sure you follow the instructions for the medicine and the spacer in your child's **Asthma Action Plan**. If you don't have an Asthma Action Plan, please talk to your child's doctor. This is an important tool that can help parents, caregivers, teachers, and your child manage their asthma.  
+ It's important that your child has a **follow-up**. Even if the medicines are working well, please let

your child's doctor know that your child has been in the ER. They may want to see your child soon.

### Prevention

To help your child avoid asthma attacks, it's important to:

- + Make sure your child takes their controller medication every day.
- + Avoid exposure to cigarette smoke.
- + Follow the Asthma Action Plan.

Sometimes asthma attacks are also triggered by colds or flus. The Asthma Action Plan has more information about triggers.

### When to Get Help

**Go to the nearest Emergency Department** if your child is having an asthma attack AND their rescue medicine isn't helping them get better.

Here are some signs they need to go to the Emergency Department:

- +The rescue medication is not lasting 4 hours.
- +Your child is breathing too fast.
- +Your child is having trouble breathing. (See Picture)
- +Your child is tired because it's hard work to breathe.
- +Retractions: Skin around the neck and ribs is pulled in with breathing. (See Picture)
- + Your child can't stop coughing or throwing up.
- + There is a wheezing or whistling noise when your child is breathing.
- + **CALL 911 for an ambulance immediately** if your child's lips or fingers are turning blue or your child cannot speak.



Trouble Breathing



Retractions

## RELEVANT RESOURCES

+ Visit <http://bit.ly/pediatric-asthma-video> to watch a helpful video on asthma.

## TO LEARN MORE ASK

- + Your family doctor.
- + HealthLinkBC - call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf or hard of hearing) or go online to [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca)

## RECOMMENDED FOLLOW UP

- 🕒 Follow up with your primary care provider in \_\_\_ days.

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