

ASTHMA

Asthma is a chronic lung disease that inflames and narrows the airways designed to carry air into and out of the lungs.

Asthma can cause three primary changes in the airways:

- Inflammation or swelling of the lining of the airways
- Tightening of the muscles surrounding the airways
- Excess mucus production

ASTHMA CAN BE CONTROLLED BUT CANNOT BE CURED.

What are the signs and symptoms of Asthma?

Coughing

Wheezing

Chest Tightness

Shortness of Breath

What can trigger asthma symptoms or an asthma attack?

Cigarettes/Smoke

Animals

Exercise

Food

Cockroaches

Dust Mites

Mold

Weather

Aerosols

Emotions

Infections

Pollens

Odors/fumes

GERD

Certain Medications

What is a Peak Flow Meter?

A **peak flow meter** is a portable, inexpensive, hand-held device that measures air-flow. Asthma sufferers blow into this device quickly and forcefully, and the resulting peak flow reading indicates how open or closed the airways are. A peak flow meter can be used to determine the severity of asthma, and detect worsening in lung function.

What is an Asthma Action Plan?

An **asthma action plan** is a written guide developed with a health care professional that will help to prevent or manage an asthma attack.

The asthma action plan is generally broken down into 3 zones based on symptoms and peak flow reading:

Green (Doing well) Yellow (Asthma is getting worse) & Red (Medical Alert)

The asthma action plan should include:

- What zone you are in based on your symptoms.
- Your personal best peak flow reading and what zone you are in based on current reading
 - Name and dose of medication you should take based on which zone you are in
 - Triggers to avoid so you stay in the green zone
- Indications you should seek emergency care along with important contact information

Know the difference between the medications you are using!

Not all asthma medications are the same. Be sure to speak with your health care professional about which medications you should be using, how much you should use and when you should use it.

Long-Acting Maintenance Agents-*These medications will help with long-term control of your asthma. They help to reduce inflammation and swelling in your airways. Using these medications as prescribed will decrease the need for a rescue inhaler. Using a spacer or rinsing out your mouth after using the inhaler can help reduce the likelihood of developing a mouth infection sometimes caused by these medications.*

Quick Relief Medication (The Rescue Inhaler)-*Anybody with asthma should have a quick relief medication with them at all times. The medication will act quickly to help relax tighten muscles and allow air to get into your lungs. These medications don't reduce inflammation and should not be used daily to control your asthma. As a general rule, if you need the rescue inhaler more than 2 times a week, your asthma is not well controlled and you should see your healthcare professional.*

Asthma Action Plan

[To be completed by Health Care Provider]

Medical Record #:

Updated On:

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Emergency Contact/Phone _____

Health Care Provider Name _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Asthma Severity: Intermittent Mild Persistent Moderate Persistent Severe Persistent

Asthma Triggers: Colds Exercise Animals Dust Smoke Food Weather Other

If Feeling Well (Green Zone)

Take Every Day Long –Term Control Medicines

You have all of these:

- Breathing is good
- No cough or wheeze
- Can work / play
- Sleeps all night

Peak flow in this area:
_____ to _____

MEDICINE:	HOW MUCH:	WHEN TO TAKE IT:

5-15 minutes before exercise use this medicine

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If Not Feeling Well (Yellow Zone)

Take Every Day Medicines and Add these Quick-Relief Medicines

You have any of these:

- Cough
- Wheeze
- Tight chest
- Coughing at night

Peak flow in this area:
_____ to _____

MEDICINE:	HOW MUCH:	WHEN TO TAKE IT:

Call doctor if these medicines are used more than two days a week.

If Feeling Very Sick (Red Zone)

Take These Medicines and Get help from a Doctor NOW!

Your asthma is getting worse fast:

- Medicine is not helping
- Breathing is hard and fast
- Nose opens wide
- Can't walk or talk well
- Ribs show

Peak flow reading below:

MEDICINE:	HOW MUCH:	WHEN TO TAKE IT:

SEEK EMERGENCY CARE or CALL 911 NOW if: Lips are bluish, Getting worse fast, Hard to breathe, Can't talk or cry because of hard breathing or has passed out

Make an appointment with your primary care provider within two days of an ER visit or hospitalization

Health Care Provider Signature _____

Date _____

Patient/Guardian Signature [I have read and understood these instructions] _____

Date _____



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New York City Asthma Initiative
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