



# ASTHMA FIRST AID IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS

## Adjustments to consider during the COVID-19 pandemic

We have had many enquiries from schools and other community first-aiders about Asthma First Aid in the context of COVID-19. We have put together some basic guidelines for infection control in an Asthma First Aid situation with the help of clinical experts, the Australian Resuscitation Council and the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation.

**Asthma First Aid should never be delayed.**

All episodes of coughing, chest tightness, and shortness of breath are possible COVID-19 symptoms, so precautions are necessary to protect first-aiders.

**We suggest these added precautions are put in place while there is still COVID-19 in Australia.**

### Our key recommendations

- Do not delay giving Asthma First Aid
- Wear an **N95 mask** and **eye shield** where possible while giving Asthma First Aid
- **Clean the reliever case and canister** after the procedure



## **ASTHMA FIRST AID PRECAUTIONS DURING COVID-19**

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- Staff responsible for delivering Asthma First Aid should be supplied with their own N95/P2 respirator mask, as well as an eye shield.
- This might include teachers, school nurses, club sport first-aiders.

### **First Aid Kit Supplies**

- Each First Aid Kit/[Asthma Emergency Kit](#) should be stocked with a reliever puffer (salbutamol) and at least 2 single-person use spacers as normal.
- Kits should have spare N95/P2 respirator masks of 2 sizes.
- Kits should have spare eye protection.

### **Procedure**

- First-aiders to wear personal protective equipment (N95/P2 respirator and eye shield).
- First-aiders to keep physical distance where possible.
- First-aiders should take any other precautions as directed by their state health department.
- Follow standard [Asthma First Aid](#) procedure

### **After Procedure**

- Dispose of the used spacer or give to the person receiving first-aid to keep
  - Note: Spacers cannot be cleaned appropriately for reuse by another person in community first-aid settings.
  - [Disposable spacers](#) are a good option.
- Clean reliever canister
  - Spray one more puff of medicine into the air to clear the nozzle.
  - Clean blue/grey case [as per standard instructions](#).
  - When dry, disinfect both case, cap and canister with a sporicidal agent or TGA listed sterilant. This could be a TGA listed disinfectant wipe that has been approved for use against COVID-19. You likely already have some on hand, check the list [here](#).
- Dispose of any disposable PPE
- Wash hands thoroughly
- Document procedure as normal
  - E.g., using our [Asthma Emergency Kit Log](#)

### **Note:**

Sporicidal agents destroy both bacterial and mould spores. Because spores are more difficult to kill than other types of germs, a sporicide also acts as a high-level disinfectant.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the TGA has permitted specific claims about products' effectiveness against the COVID-19 virus. A listing of TGA approved disinfectants for use against COVID-19 can be found here: [TGA: Disinfectants for use against COVID-19](#)



## **ASTHMA FIRST AID IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS: Adjustments to consider during the COVID-19 pandemic**

### **USEFUL LINKS**

[Asthma First Aid Poster](#)

[Asthma Guidelines for Australian Schools](#)

[Schools Asthma Health Check](#)

[Asthma First Aid Kits](#)

[Disposable spacers](#)

[Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare](#)

[Basic Life Support for Adults in the community during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[TGA: Disinfectants for use against COVID-19](#)





**ASTHMA  
AUSTRALIA**

**1800 ASTHMA**  
(1800 278 462)

**[asthma.org.au](http://asthma.org.au)**