

THINGS TO ASK & TELL YOUR DOCTOR



THINGS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR



- 1 How can I tell when my asthma is under good control?

- 2 How can I tell when I am getting a flare-up of asthma symptoms?

- 3 What medications do I need to take every day for my asthma?

- 4 How can I work out which triggers make my asthma worse? Can I do anything about them?

- 5 I cough, sneeze and wheeze. Do I have hay fever? How can I control it?

- 6 If exercise sets off my asthma, what can I do to control that, so I can keep active?

- 7 What do I do if my asthma gradually gets worse over a few weeks?

- 8 What do I do if I have a sudden or severe asthma flare-up (an asthma attack)?

- 9 Can you please check that I am using my asthma devices and/or nasal spray correctly?

- 10 Can I have a written Asthma Action Plan? (or can you check that my written Asthma Action Plan is up to date?)

- 11 When should I see you again for an asthma review?

THINGS TO TELL YOUR DOCTOR



If you have a written Asthma Action Plan, bring it to your appointment, so that your doctor can check it is correct and up to date.

Symptoms

- If you have had any night-time asthma symptoms, such as cough, wheeze or breathlessness, since your last check-up
- How many days a week you have had day-time asthma symptoms in the last month
- If your asthma has made it hard to keep up with normal activity
- If you have had any asthma flare-ups or attacks since your last visit
- If you cough, wheeze or sneeze or have symptoms such as, itchy nose or eyes, runny or blocked nose, throat clearing or snoring

Triggers

- Anything that seems to trigger/make your asthma worse
- What you do about your triggers and whether this helps
- How much exercise you do and any asthma symptoms during or after exercise
- If you have hay fever or other allergies
- If you have ever been affected by thunderstorm asthma



Medication & devices

- How often you have taken your reliever medication in the last month
- How often you take your preventer medication
- Show your doctor how you use your asthma devices and/or nasal spray
- If you are taking any medication to treat your hay fever
- If you are using any other medications or complementary therapies

General health

- Any other changes in your health, e.g. quitting smoking, increasing exercise, weight changes, allergies, other health issues
- For women, if you are planning a pregnancy or may be pregnant



SPECIALIST CARE

If you've had two or more flare-ups in a 12 month period, request a referral to a specialist.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE YOUR DOCTOR, MAKE SURE:

- Your medications have been reviewed, you know which ones to take and when and that you have enough prescriptions until your next visit
- You can use your asthma medication devices correctly
- You have an up-to-date written Asthma Action Plan
- You have booked another appointment for review



If you have been to hospital or an emergency department for your asthma, ensure you visit your doctor within three days after discharge and again in another 2 - 4 weeks.

This brochure, developed by Asthma Australia, provides basic information about things to ask and tell your doctor.

Other Asthma Australia resources:

- Asthma Basic Facts
- Asthma Medications & Devices
- Things to Ask & Tell your Pharmacist



All Asthma Australia information is consistent with the National Asthma Council's, The Australian Asthma Handbook (2020).

Asthma Australia information does not replace professional medical advice. People should ask their doctor any questions about diagnosis and treatment.

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ASTHMA FIRST AID

Blue/Grey Reliever

Airomir, Asmol, Ventolin or Zempreon and Bricanyl

Blue/grey reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma



DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY IF THE PERSON:

- is not breathing
- suddenly becomes worse or is not improving
- is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
- is unsure if it is asthma
- **has a known allergy to food, insects or medication and has SUDDEN BREATHING DIFFICULTY, GIVE ADRENALINE AUTOINJECTOR FIRST (if available), even if there are no skin changes, then use a reliever**

1



SIT THE PERSON UPRIGHT

- Be **calm** and reassuring
- **Do not leave** them alone

2



GIVE 4 SEPARATE PUFFS OF RELIEVER PUFFER

- **Shake** puffer
- Put **1 puff** into spacer
- Take **4 breaths** from spacer
 - Repeat until **4 puffs** have been taken



If using **Bricanyl**, give 2 separate inhalations (5 years or older)

If you don't have a spacer handy in an emergency, take **1 puff** as you take **1 slow, deep breath** and hold breath for as long as comfortable. **Repeat** until all puffs are given

3



WAIT 4 MINUTES

- If breathing does not return to normal, give **4 more separate puffs** of reliever as above



Bricanyl: Give 1 more inhalation

IF BREATHING DOES NOT RETURN TO NORMAL

4



DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000)

- Say **'ambulance'** and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving **4 separate puffs every 4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives



Bricanyl: Give 1 more inhalation **every 4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives