

# BACK TO SCHOOL... IS YOUR CHILD ASTHMA READY?



Every year there is a rise in asthma flare-ups when children return to school after the summer holidays. This results in an increase in Emergency Department visits, hospitalisations and days off school.

## MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS ASTHMA READY BY FOLLOWING THESE STEPS:

### 1 BOOK AN ASTHMA REVIEW (LONG APPOINTMENT)

This is a special check-up for your child's asthma, recent asthma control, **symptoms**, summer and back to school triggers, and **medicine** use. Don't forget to include a check on their **device technique**.

### 2 UPDATE YOUR CHILD'S ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

During the **Asthma Review** ask the doctor for a signed **written Asthma Action Plan**. Schools and Outside School Hours Care will require an up-to-date plan for each student with asthma at the start of the new school year. Evidence tells us that using a written Asthma Action Plan to identify and manage a flare-up sooner can help to reduce hospitalisations, improve lung function and reduce the number of days off school.

### 3 RELIEVER MEDICATION AND SPACER

Check with the school about their medication policy and work with the staff to find the best way to manage your child's asthma medication, including before physical activity (where applicable).

- Make sure your reliever medication is in date with enough medication remaining. If not, purchase a new one
- Purchase a new spacer (and mask if age appropriate) for use at school
- Ensure the pharmacist labels medication with your child's name and you label the spacer with your child's name

### 4 TALK TO SCHOOL STAFF

Make time to talk with the class teacher and the school nurse (where applicable) about your child's asthma, their written Asthma Action Plan and their usual triggers, symptoms and medication.

Also talk to your child's sport coaches and supervisors of other school activities. Don't forget to keep staff up-to-date with any change to your child's asthma management.

Any changes to asthma management throughout the school year, requires an updated written Asthma Action Plan to be completed by your doctor and provided to the school.

#### If a child -

- has symptoms during the day more than 2 days per week
- has to stop activities such as playing or exercise because they get asthma symptoms
- wakes up with asthma during the night or early morning
- needs reliever more than 2 days per week (not including prior to exercise)

then take your child to their doctor as this indicates signs of worsening asthma.

For more information call **1800 ASTHMA** (1800 278 462) to speak with an Asthma Educator or visit [asthma.org.au/back-to-school](https://asthma.org.au/back-to-school)

