

# 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.

Discuss your child's pattern of asthma symptoms and ask the doctor if they need a preventer medicine.

If your child already has a preventer, make sure you have enough repeat prescriptions. They may also be eligible for a 60-day prescription to make things cheaper - ask the doctor to find out.

### 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.

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.

### 3 RELIEVER MEDICINE AND SPACER

Check with the school about their medicine policy and work with the staff to find the best way to manage your child's asthma medicine. This might include using it before physical activity if needed.

- Make sure their reliever medicine is in date with enough medicine remaining. If not, purchase a new one
- Purchase a new spacer (and mask if age appropriate) for use at school
- Ensure the pharmacist labels medicine 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 medicine.

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.

### 5 ASTHMA CONTROL

Keep an eye on your child's level of asthma control during the year.

#### If a child -

- has symptoms during the day more than 2 days per week
- has to limit activities such as playing or exercise because they get asthma symptoms
- has any symptoms at night (including coughing during sleep)
- 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.

You can check their asthma score online at [asthma.org.au/asthma-control](http://asthma.org.au/asthma-control)