



**ASTHMA  
AUSTRALIA**

# **YOUR AFTER HOSPITAL ASTHMA PACK**

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Getting your asthma back on track

Information and support:

**1800 ASTHMA**

(1800 278 462)

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



**ASTHMA  
AUSTRALIA**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Date you were admitted to hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Date you left the hospital: \_\_\_\_\_



# THIS PACK IS THE FIRST STEP IN GETTING YOUR ASTHMA BACK ON TRACK

Having an asthma attack and ending up in Emergency can be a scary and confronting experience.

*How did my asthma get this bad?*

*How do I lower my risk of having another asthma attack?*

*How do I make sure I don't end up back in Emergency because of my asthma?*

This After Hospital Asthma Pack will help answer these questions and more. It's been developed using the Australian Asthma Handbook<sup>1</sup> along with input from our very own Asthma Educators.

It's a sad fact that 62% of children and 40% of adults will re-present to an Emergency Department within one year of their initial presentation due to an asthma attack.<sup>2</sup> However, using the practical steps outlined in this Plan, you can reduce your risk.

<sup>1</sup> National Asthma Council 2019, Australian Asthma Handbook 2.0, NAC: Melbourne. <sup>2</sup> Wakefield M, Campbell D, Staugas R, et al 1997. Risk factors for repeat attendance at hospital emergency departments among adults and children with asthma. Aust N Z J Med; 27: 277-284.

# 3 STEPS TO TAKE BEFORE YOU GO HOME

**INTERIM ASTHMA ACTION PLAN**

You have been to hospital due to experiencing an asthma flare up or attack. Follow this plan to help bring your asthma back under control. Make an appointment with your doctor within three (3) days of discharge and a second appointment within 2-4 weeks, for review and development of a new Asthma Action Plan.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
UR: \_\_\_\_\_  
DOB: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Interim Action Plan prepared on: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Follow up with hospital required

**RELIEVER MEDICATION**

Take \_\_\_\_\_ puffs/inhalations of \_\_\_\_\_ when symptoms arise

**If your symptoms return within three (3) hours, seek urgent medical assistance.**

**PREVENTER MEDICATION**

Take \_\_\_\_\_ puffs/inhalations of \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ mcg \_\_\_\_\_ times a day

\*Generics are available for these medications. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

**MAINTENANCE AND RELIEVER THERAPY**

Please complete the below section if your patient is on a maintenance and reliever therapy.

Take \_\_\_\_\_ puffs/inhalations of \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ mcg \_\_\_\_\_ times a day

**AND** take \_\_\_\_\_ puffs/inhalations of \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ mcg as your reliever when required

Do not use more than \_\_\_\_\_ inhalations on a single occasion or more than \_\_\_\_\_ inhalations in any day.

**If your symptoms continue to worsen over three (3) days, despite using additional inhalations, tell your doctor.**

**PREDNISOLONE TABLETS OR ORAL LIQUID**

Take \_\_\_\_\_ mgs OR \_\_\_\_\_ mls once a day for \_\_\_\_\_ days

**OTHER ASTHMA MEDICATIONS (ADD ON THERAPIES)**


Take \_\_\_\_\_

Take \_\_\_\_\_

Take \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER INSTRUCTIONS** \_\_\_\_\_

For asthma information and support or to speak with an Asthma Educator call **1800 ASTHMA** (1800 278 462) or visit [asthma.org.au](http://asthma.org.au)

 **ASTHMA AUSTRALIA**

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1

## INTERIM ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

- Have you been given an Interim Asthma Action Plan?
- Has your doctor or nurse explained how to follow this plan?

You should be given an Interim Asthma Action Plan before you leave hospital. Follow this plan until you see your usual doctor (GP or Specialist) within three (3) days and to have your ongoing Asthma Action Plan developed or reviewed.

An Interim Asthma Action Plan is a written set of instructions explaining how to manage your asthma following an asthma attack and it should help bring your asthma under control by telling you:

- what medications you need to take and when
- what to do if your asthma symptoms worsen again

There is a blank Interim Asthma Action Plan at the back of this booklet, ask your Hospital Doctor to complete this before you leave hospital.

## 2

### MEDICATIONS AND DEVICES

- Have you been given the medications prescribed on your Interim Asthma Action Plan (e.g. blue/grey reliever and a preventer)?**  
If not, have you been given a prescription and know where to get your medications from?
- Has someone at the hospital checked your inhaler technique?**  
Poor technique can lead to poor asthma control. If your technique is correct, you will get the most out of your medications.
- If you use a puffer, do you have a spacer?** If not, visit your local pharmacy and check your technique using a puffer and spacer.
- If you were prescribed any new medications in hospital, inform your regular doctor and ask for a repeat prescription if necessary.**

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The key way asthma is managed is with regular preventer medication. Ongoing use of your preventer medication every day as prescribed, is the best way to help prevent another asthma attack and manage your asthma symptoms. Blue/grey reliever medication provides quick relief of asthma symptoms.



## 3

### SEE YOUR DOCTOR TO GET BACK ON TRACK!

- See your doctor within three (3) days of being discharged from hospital.** It is important to see your doctor after any asthma attack even if you do feel better.
- Make a second appointment for 2-4 weeks after discharge.** It's important to monitor your asthma and make a plan for ongoing asthma management. This is where you update your Interim Asthma Action plan to an ongoing written Asthma Action Plan.

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Asthma isn't something you have to deal with on your own. Your doctor, other health professionals and Asthma Australia can help you get good asthma control, so you can live a full and active life.

# **WHAT TO DO AFTER HOSPITAL**

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## TAKE TIME TO RECOVER

It's important to take time to rest after an asthma attack. Reach out to your friends and family for help if you need and ask your doctor for a certificate to take sick leave from work if necessary.

## CUT THE RISK

People often treat their asthma as a short-term condition that comes and goes when they have asthma symptoms. But, asthma is a chronic (long-term) condition that's always there, even when you don't have symptoms. Managing your asthma year round is important to maintaining good asthma control.







## CHECK IN WITH YOUR DOCTOR

See your doctor at least every six (6) months to assess your asthma control, make sure your medications are working in the right way for you, your device technique is correct and to update your written Asthma Action Plan as needed.

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## WRITTEN ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

Follow a written Asthma Action Plan every day for:

- better controlled asthma
- fewer asthma flare-ups
- fewer days off work or school
- reduced reliever medication use
- fewer hospital visits



## LEARN ASTHMA FIRST AID

Learn the four steps of Asthma First Aid (see following page) to ensure you are prepared in an asthma emergency. Download the Asthma First Aid App from the iTunes store or Google Play.

To ensure you are always prepared, make sure to carry your blue reliever puffer with you at all times.

## PREVENTER – EVERY DAY EVEN WHEN WELL

Most adults and adolescents with asthma should have preventer medication.

Daily use of a preventer as prescribed is key to keeping well. Regular use of your preventer makes the airways less sensitive and will reduce your symptoms.

## KNOW WHEN YOUR ASTHMA IS WORSENING

- Are your symptoms making you use your blue/grey reliever puffer more than two (2) days per week?
- Have you had difficulty sleeping because of your asthma symptoms (including cough)?
- Have you had your usual asthma symptoms during the day (cough, wheeze, chest tightness or breathlessness)?
- Has your asthma interfered with your usual activities (e.g. housework, work/school, etc.)?

Experiencing any one of these, is a sign that your asthma may not be under control. Make an appointment with your doctor as soon as possible.



## WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Asthma isn't something you have to deal with on your own.

For asthma information and support or to speak with an Asthma Educator call **1800 ASTHMA** (1800 278 462) or visit [asthma.org.au](https://www.asthma.org.au)

# 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

This pack has been developed by Asthma Australia for people living with asthma.

It provides information on what to do after being discharged from hospital and/or Emergency due to experiencing an asthma attack. It includes:

- Steps to take before you go home
- What to do after hospital
- How you can cut the risk
- Who can help?



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All Asthma Australia information is consistent with the National Asthma Council's, The Australian Asthma Handbook (2019).

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

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