

ROADMAP TO ASTHMA CONTROL:

How to Navigate Your Way from Symptoms to Control



How do I know it is asthma?



Is my asthma controlling me?



So, I have asthma. Now what?



I have control of my asthma!



How do I know it is asthma?

Diagnosing Asthma

Common symptoms of asthma may include:

- ✓ cough in the middle of the night. A stuffy nose may also cause coughing when you are going to sleep and just after waking in the morning, this may not be asthma. Cough in the middle of the night is more likely to be a symptom of asthma
- ✓ cough, shortness of breath or wheeze 3 to 5 minutes after the start of vigorous exercise
- ✓ cough (especially in middle of the night) for several weeks after you have a cold
- ✓ cough, shortness of breath or wheeze within 12 hours of being exposed to asthma triggers such as animal dander, smoke, pollen, mold, dust.

If you experience any of the above symptoms, see your family doctor or pediatrician. Your doctor may refer you for a breathing test and prescribe a trial of puffers.



So I may have asthma. Now what?

Things to expect when you go to your doctor:

1. Your doctor will likely refer you for a breathing test (anyone over 6 years of age).
2. Asthma puffer prescription to try for several weeks, this could be for:
 - an inhaled corticosteroid. Over time, this medicine will decrease or eliminate symptoms if you have asthma.
 - a reliever puffer. This medicine is used whenever asthma symptoms occur to give quick and temporary relief. It is sometimes used just before exercise.
 - teaching by a health care professional on how to properly use your new puffer.
3. A first draft of your personal Asthma Action Plan
 - This plan may change over time and should be reviewed at least every year.
4. Allergy testing may be recommended if the doctor suspects any allergic triggers. The first step in asthma control is avoiding triggers whenever possible.



Is my asthma controlling me?

If you have been diagnosed with asthma and you notice more than usual asthma symptoms, here are some questions to ask yourself and your doctor.

1. *Is your asthma medicine device not working for you? Check the following:*
 - ✓ Is my puffer empty, or expired? Am I using it correctly? Am I taking enough? Is my spacer broken?
2. *Are you taking your medicine or are you avoiding it because you are concerned about side effects?*
 - ✓ Discuss your concerns with your doctor, asthma educator or pharmacist.
3. *Are you taking your medicine consistently?*
 - ✓ Inhaled corticosteroids must be taken daily and can take at least two weeks before you see less symptoms
4. *Am I following my Asthma Action Plan?*
 - ✓ Did I take action quickly enough when I started to notice an increase in symptoms?



I have control of my asthma!

You can keep your asthma under control! The goal is to have the best control of your symptoms while using the least amount of medicine. To get and keep your asthma under control follow these simple steps:



Control Your Asthma Now!

This material is for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instruction, and/or treatment. If you have questions, talk with your doctor or appropriate healthcare professional.