COMMUNITY PEDIATRIC ASTHMA SERVICE

PREPARING FOR MY FACE-TO-FACE APPOINTMENT

WHAT TO DO

Reminders:

- ✓ **Bring** all your asthma medicine(s) and devices - even if you are not using them right now

Helpful things to know or learn about your asthma

- ✓ How to tell if your asthma is well-controlled
- ✓ Why it is important to keep your asthma in good control
- ✓ The difference between your preventer and your reliever medicines
- ✓ If there are any potential side effects to your asthma medicine(s)
- ✓ How to know when your preventer medicine needs to be changed
- ✓ Complete/review your personalized **Asthma Action Plan**

IMPORTANT: If your child or any individual attending an in-person appointment becomes ill within 7 days of the scheduled date, please contact CPAS at (403) 943-9139. We will arrange for your appointment to be changed to a virtual appointment. The virtual appointment will be at the same time and date. If necessary, our team will schedule a follow-up visit once you or your child has fully recovered.

WHERE TO GO

Clinic Locations: Your appointment is at one of our clinic locations below. Need a map? Click on the name of the clinic.

Still unsure where to go? Give us a call at 403-943-9139

Community Pediatric Asthma Clinic Locations	
Alberta Children's Hospital, Calgary • 28 Oki Drive, NW • Take the elevators to the 3rd floor • Check in at "Respiratory Clinics" Reception	**Okotoks Health & Wellness Centre**, Okotoks • 11 Cimarron Common • Check-in at Reception
Airdrie Regional Health Centre, Airdrie • 604 Main Street South • Go to the Public Health Desk • When you arrive, ring the white bell	**South Calgary Health Centre**, Calgary • 31 Sunpark Plaza SE • Use the "NORTH" entrance doors • Check in at the Information Desk
Cochrane Community Health Centre, Cochrane • 60 Grande Boulevard • Check in at Reception	**South Health Campus**, Calgary • 4448 Front Street SE • Take outpatient elevators to the 7th floor • Go to Pediatric Reception desk 7B
East Calgary Health Centre, Calgary • 4715 - 8th Avenue SE • Check in at Reception	**Sunridge Medical Gallery,** Calgary • Sunridge Mall • #100, 2580 – 32 Street NE • The AHS entrance is outside the mall near the Carter's/ OshKosh stores • Ring the bell when you arrive

Does My Child Have Asthma?

"Does my child have asthma?" is a common question families ask. Asthma can make it hard to breathe and can cause coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath or tightness in your chest. These things we see and feel are called symptoms. Asthma symptoms can come and go, making it hard to know if a child has asthma.

It may take weeks, months or even years to confirm asthma, but there are ways to help us know if it is more likely or less likely that a child has asthma. The information you share with health professionals helps us understand if it is asthma. These are the 5 important things to think about:

1. **SYMPTOMS**
2. **TRIGGERS**
3. **MEDICAL HISTORY**
4. **RESPONSE TO MEDICINE**
5. **BREATHING TESTS (when a child is about 6 years old)**

The information below includes ideas to help you learn what to look for and what to write down to share with your doctor or asthma educator.

Visit our website at **www.ucalgary.ca/icancontrolasthma** for more information and other resources.

1. SYMPTOMS

Common asthma symptoms include:

- **Cough** – Cough may come and go. It can be worse during the middle of the night. Some children cough so hard they struggle to breathe or throw up
- **Wheeze** – This is a whistling sound you hear when your child takes a breath in or out. Visit our website to hear wheezing (see "Videos" tab ➜ "A Little Asthma Story")
- **Tight Chest** – Some children say asthma feels like being squeezed or having something heavy sitting on your chest. This can be hard for children to describe
- **Shortness of Breath** – Children often say they cannot get a full breath in. They may need to stop playing to catch their breath or they can't keep up with their friends when running or playing

2. TRIGGERS

Triggers can cause **asthma symptoms** or may make the symptoms you already have worse. Triggers are different for everyone. Some common asthma triggers include:

- **Colds/Flu** – the most common trigger
- **Allergies** – animals, pollen, mold, dust
- **Emotions/Stress**
- **Environment** – strong smells, weather changes
- **Exercise/Play**

3. HISTORY

It is important to share your child's medical history with a healthcare professional:

- **Patient History** – Children who have asthma symptoms or hospital visits for breathing trouble are more likely to have asthma. Children who have allergies or eczema are also ***more likely*** to have asthma
- **Family History** – Children who come from families with asthma or allergic conditions (such as eczema, hay fever and even food allergies) are ***more likely*** to have asthma

4. RESPONSE TO MEDICINE

If your child has a pattern of symptoms that look like asthma, they may be given a trial of asthma medicine. Asthma medicine must be taken properly to work. Visit our website to watch videos on how to take your asthma medicines (Click "Devices" tab).

There are two different types of asthma medicine:

Relievers

- These puffers are blue and give temporary relief of asthma symptoms
- They should work quickly and relieve symptom for 3 or 4 hours
- Be sure to tell your child's doctor if this medicine is NOT helping

Controllers or Preventers

- These medicines are usually orange, red or brown. They control asthma and help prevent symptoms
- These medicines must be used every day for them to work and it often takes 2 weeks or more to have the best effect
- If your child was given a puffer at the hospital, it is important that you see your family doctor before stopping this medicine

5. BREATHING TESTS

- When children are about 6 years old, they can do a simple breathing test called spirometry. Spirometry is only one part of the overall picture we build to decide if a child has asthma
- Since asthma symptoms come and go, the breathing test only tells us about the lungs on the day the test is done. This means a normal breathing test **does not** rule out asthma

OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Asthma can be diagnosed at any age. Watch for asthma symptoms and see if taking asthma medicine relieves those symptoms
- Children who regularly have asthma symptoms are treated with puffers to lessen the impact of colds. Research shows that half of these children will not have asthma by the time they reach school age
- Finally, don't be confused by words like ***reactive airway disease, wheezy bronchitis, happy wheezer*** and ***bronchospasm.*** These are just words some people use to describe asthma symptoms

If your child does have asthma, the good news is that asthma can be well controlled and should not prevent children from doing ***anything they want to do!***

Patient & Family Centred Care

Alberta Health Services

Alberta Children's Hospital

iCAN control asthma now

This document has been designed for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instruction and/or treatment. If you have specific questions, please consult your doctor or appropriate health care professional.

Alberta Children's Hospital

When and Where to Get Help for Asthma

- Uncontrolled asthma can lead to emergency visits and admission to hospital. See your doctor, asthma educator or pharmacist for more information about how to control your asthma
- Know the emergency numbers in your area. In Alberta, Health Link is a 24-hour telephone advice line staffed by experienced nurses. **If you have any urgent questions, dial 811 in Alberta**

	SEE YOUR DOCTOR	GO TO AN EMERGENCY	CALL 911
What You See/Feel	• If you are using or giving reliever medicine (blue) more than 2 times/week	• If the skin at the base of your child's neck, between the ribs, or below the breastbone pulls in when your child breathes • If your child has no energy to play or even move around • Your baby will not eat or drink	• If you have or see symptoms that are very serious - breathing very fast, gasping for breath, trouble speaking, blue-grey lips or fingernails, CALL 911
What To Do	• If asthma symptoms are getting worse, take or give preventer/controller medicine at the highest dose recommended by the doctor • If you do not see improvement in 12 – 24 hours, make an appointment to see a doctor as soon as possible	• Give or take reliever medicine (blue). This medicine should make breathing easier within 5 - 10 minutes. Relief should last for 3 - 4 hours • If the dose needs to be repeated before 3 hours, please go to Emergency • You know best. If you are worried, go to Emergency	• Stay calm • CALL 911 and give the reliever medicine (blue) every few minutes until help arrives
What Usually Happens	• Everyone with asthma should have an **Asthma Action Plan**. Your plan will help you know how to adjust medicine to control asthma • Make an appointment with your doctor or asthma educator to develop an **Asthma Action Plan** • Print a blank copy of an Asthma Action Plan to take to your doctor or health care provider	• It is normal to stay several hours for treatment/observation. You or your child may be admitted to hospital until asthma symptoms are in better control • Along with regular medicine, you may also be prescribed a short course of oral steroids to help get asthma back in control more quickly • Ask for an Emergency Asthma Action Plan • Ask to be referred for asthma education	• Paramedics will treat you • You may go to Emergency for more treatment • It is normal to stay several hours for treatment/observation. You may be admitted to hospital until asthma is in better control

OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO:

1. If possible, remove yourself or your child from any known triggers
2. Sit up. Loosen tight clothing
3. Make an appointment with your family doctor/pediatrician as soon as possible after an asthma emergency visit

Alberta Health Services

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COMMUNITY PEDIATRIC ASTHMA SERVICE

Asthma Control

My asthma is **not well controlled** if I answer 'Yes' to **any 1** of these questions
(at any point in time)

	Question	Yes	No
1.	Do I cough, wheeze, or have a tight chest because of my asthma?	❒	❒
2.	Does coughing, wheezing, or chest tightness wake me at night?	❒	❒
3.	Do I stop exercising because of my asthma?	❒	❒
4.	Do I miss work or school because of my asthma?	❒	❒
5.	Do I use my reliever medicine 2 or more times a week?	❒	❒

Resources in one click!

Our most popular information with fast, easy access using QR codes

Our Asthma Website
Visit the Community Pediatric Asthma Service website and see "Resources" tab for popular patient resources

Asthma Information in 14 Languages
Asthma information in 14 languages including a Little Asthma Plan, A Little Asthma Story (video) and how to use asthma puffers

When and Where to Get Help
What to do when asthma symptoms gets worse

Does My Child Have Asthma?
What we look for

Asthma Action Plan

My Name: _____ **Date:** _____

What Matters To Me: _____

Circle My Triggers

smoke
colds
animals
pollens
mold
dust
strong smells
weather changes
strong emotions
other_____

Circle My Usual Symptoms: Cough / Wheeze / Short of Breath / Tight Chest / Other _____

Is my asthma well controlled?

Yes — No symptoms, regular activities

No — Cough, wheeze, short of breath, tight chest, colds, allergies

Not at all — Very short of breath, trouble speaking, blue/grey lips/fingernails

1. Daytime symptoms	None	3 or more times a week	Continuous & getting worse
2. Nighttime symptoms	None	1 or more times a week	Continuous & getting worse
3. Reliever use (other than if prescribed for exercise)	None	3 or more times a week	Relief for less than 3 to 4 hours
4. Physical activity or exercise	Normal	Limited	Very limited
5. Can go to school or work	Yes	Maybe	No

What to do:

	STAY CONTROLLED & AVOID MY TRIGGERS	TAKE ACTION See a doctor if no improvement in ____ days	GET HELP
Controller: Use EVERY DAY to control asthma and prevent flare-ups. 1. _____ (name / colour / strength) 2. _____ (name / colour / strength) 3. _____ (name / colour / strength) 4. _____ (name / colour / strength)	1. Take _____ (amount) ☒ AM ☐ PM 2. Take _____ (amount) ☐ AM ☐ PM 3. Take _____ (amount) ☐ AM ☐ PM 4. Take _____ (amount) ☐ AM ☐ PM	Continue this dose for _____ 1. Take _____ (amount) ☐ AM ☐ PM 2. Take _____ (amount) ☐ AM ☐ PM 3. Take _____ (amount) ☐ AM ☐ PM 4. Take _____ (amount) ☐ AM ☐ PM	EMERGENCY 911 Notes:
Reliever: Quickly and temporarily helps asthma symptoms. _____ (name / colour / strength)	Take reliever before exercise? ☐ Yes Take _____ (# of puffs) as needed	Continue this dose for _____ Take _____ (# of puffs) as needed	**Take 5 to 10 puffs of my reliever medicine every 10 to 20 minutes while I get help.**

Patients can view this Asthma Action Plan at: www.myhealth.alberta.ca

Clinicians can download a fillable version of this Asthma Action Plan at: www.ucalgary.ca/icancontrolasthma

Completed with: _____

I share and complete this plan with my healthcare team.

811 Health Link Health Advice 24/7

Adapted from the Laval Hospital Action Plan, Boulet L.P. et. al., 2001 and the COPD & Asthma Network of Alberta 2012.
January 2018

Steps to Control My Asthma

Avoid My Triggers

I avoid my triggers as an important step to control my asthma. I may need less medicine when I avoid my triggers and keep control of my asthma.

+

Take My Medicines

I take my medicines as directed by my doctor. This helps me lead an active life and have healthy lungs. My asthma medicines are safe and effective for controlling asthma.

+

Check My Technique

I bring my asthma medicines to every medical appointment to make sure I am using them correctly. I ask my healthcare team to review my technique, to make sure my lungs get the medicine they need to stay healthy. If I use a metered-dose inhaler (MDI), I should add-on a spacer to help the medicine get properly into my lungs.

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Follow My Action Plan

I use my Asthma Action Plan to take ACTION early - this is the best way to get my asthma well controlled. I review my Asthma Action Plan with my healthcare team (doctor, asthma educator, pharmacist, nurse) **every 6 months**.

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Asthma Control

My asthma is **not well controlled** if I answer 'Yes' to **any 1** of these questions (at any point in time):

1. Do I cough, wheeze, or have a tight chest because of my asthma? ❑ Yes ❑ No
2. Does coughing, wheezing, or chest tightness wake me at night? ❑ Yes ❑ No
3. Do I stop exercising because of my asthma? ❑ Yes ❑ No
4. Do I miss work or school because of my asthma? ❑ Yes ❑ No
5. Do I use my reliever medicine 3 or more times a week? ❑ Yes ❑ No

My Healthcare Team Contacts:

My Questions and Things to Remember:

Asthma Resources:

Alberta's Information and Tools
www.ucalgary.ca/icancontrolasthma

Alberta's Information and Tools in Other Languages
www.ucalgary.ca/icancontrolasthma/languages

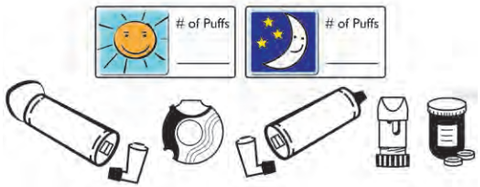
Asthma Society of Canada
www.asthma.ca

The Lung Association of Canada
www.lung.ca

This Asthma Action Plan was developed by Alberta's health care professionals in collaboration with COPD & Asthma Network of Alberta, Alberta Asthma Centre, Alberta Strategy To Help Manage Asthma & COPD, Family Physician Airways Group of Canada, Alberta Health Services' Respiratory Health Strategic Clinical Network™ and The Lung Association of Alberta & NWT™. 'Steps to Control' are adapted from Alberta's Community Pediatric Asthma Service.

A Little Asthma Action Plan for: _____ Date: _____ Goal(s): _____

Controller (Every day)

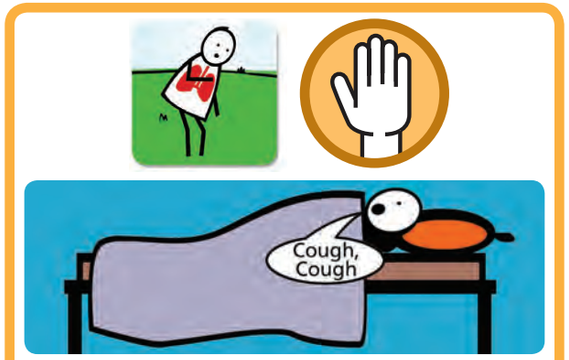


_____ / _____ / _____
medicine **dose** **colour**

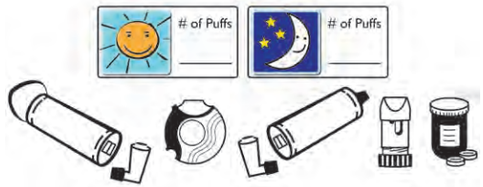
_____ / _____ / _____
medicine **dose** **colour**

Reliever (When you need it)

_____ / _____ / _____
medicine **dose** **colour**



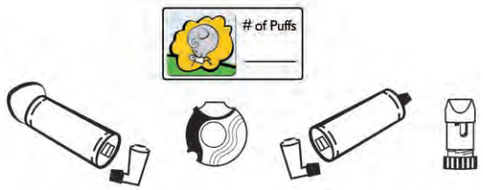
Controller



_____ / _____ / _____
medicine **dose** **colour**

_____ / _____ / _____
medicine **dose** **colour**

Reliever (Can use every 4 hours)



_____ / _____ / _____
medicine **dose** **colour**

See a doctor if you are not better in 2-3 days

See a Doctor soon if:

- your asthma symptoms are not getting better, even with more medicine
- you need your reliever medicine more often

Go to Emergency if:

- reliever medicine does not last at least 3 hours
- skin at the base of the neck, between ribs or below the breast bone pulls in with breathing
- children have no energy to play or move around
- babies refuse to eat or drink

Call 911 if:

- very serious symptoms – breathing very fast, gasping for breath, having difficulty speaking, blue-grey lips or fingernails
- give reliever medicine every few minutes until help arrives
- comfort your child by trying to stay calm until help arrives

NOVEMBER 2018

Questions or concerns? In Alberta, call **811** for the 24/7 health information and advice line.

Community Pediatric Asthma Service

Control Asthma Now!

Living with Asthma

www.ucalgary.ca/icancontrolasthma

Alberta Health Services

iCAN control asthma now

Control Asthma Now!

Living with Asthma

Asthma can make it hard to breath and can cause coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath or tightness in your chest.

Avoid Your Triggers

Asthma Triggers	What Can You Do?
Tobacco Smoke	Don't smoke. Never allow smoking in your home or car.
Colds & Flu	Wash hands often. Follow your Asthma Action Plan at the first sign of a cold or flu.
Pet Dander	Avoid pets with fur, hair or feathers. Wash pets regularly.
Pollen	Close windows during pollen season (Spring and Fall). Use air conditioning in your car or home. Avoid freshly cut grass.
Mould	Avoid rotting leaves, garden waste and brown grass in the Spring and Fall. Keep humidity below 50% in your home. Keep bathrooms and basements dry.
Dust Mites	Wash bedding in hot water. Vacuum and dust often. Use mite-proof covers for pillows and mattresses.
Strong Smells	Avoid fumes and chemicals when you can.
Weather	Changes in the weather can trigger asthma. Stay inside when outside weather may trigger your asthma.
Air Pollution	Stay indoors when air quality may trigger your asthma. Avoid campfire smoke.
Emotions	Try to avoid stressful situations. Learn to manage stress.
Activity	Exercise regularly for good health. Use your reliever medicine 10-15 minutes before exercise if you need it.

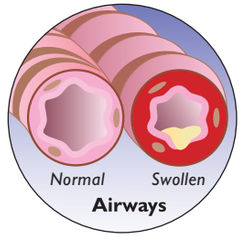
Medicines

Asthma medicines have been used for many years and have proven to be safe and effective.

There are two types of inhaled medicines, "controllers" and "relievers."

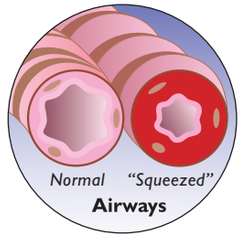
Controllers

- Controller medicines are corticosteroids to help heal and reduce swelling and mucus in your airways, making them less sensitive to triggers
- Take every day, even when you have no symptoms, to help keep your asthma well controlled



Relievers

- Reliever medicines temporarily relax the muscles around your airways to reduce symptoms like coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath or tightness in your chest
- Use when you need it

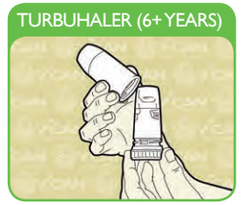


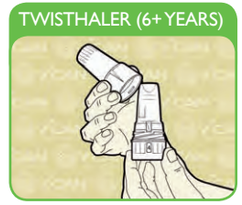
Important Reminders

- Know when your medicines are empty or expired
- Replace spacer if valves are missing or broken
- Bring ALL your asthma medicines to every asthma appointment.

Take Your Inhalers Properly

It's important to use your inhaler properly so the most medicine can reach your lungs. See videos on our website under the "Devices" tab. Show your health provider how you use your inhalers.





Asthma Control

Asthma is well controlled when you have:

- No daytime symptoms
- No nighttime symptoms
- No limits to normal physical activity
- No missed school or work
- No need for reliever medicine except sometimes for exercise

Steps to take...

1) Avoid your triggers
2) Use your medicines
3) Take your inhalers properly
4) Follow your Asthma Action Plan

You CAN control your asthma now!

This information is provided by the Community Pediatric Asthma Service, a program to help children and families learn to control asthma.

Visit our website at

www.ucalgary.ca/icancontrolasthma

Alberta Health Services

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