

PATIENT EDUCATION/SELF MANAGEMENT

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a disease that affects your airways. Airways are the tubes that carry air in and out of your lungs. There are different kinds of asthma:

- ◆ **Intermittent:** You may have symptoms that come and go and are very mild. You do not need a “controller” inhaler, but you may sometimes need to use a “rescue” inhaler
- ◆ **Persistent:** You have worse symptoms that happen more often. You need a “controller” inhaler to keep from having symptoms
- ◆ **Exercise Related:** You only have symptoms when you exercise. You may need to use your “rescue” inhaler before starting to exercise

What Causes Asthma?

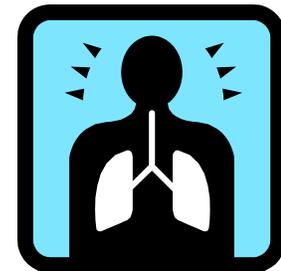
- ◆ Can be common in your family
- ◆ Is more common in people with allergies
- ◆ Pollution can either cause asthma or make it worse
- ◆ Being exposed to certain diseases as a child adds to the chance of getting asthma



What are the Symptoms of Asthma?

When you have asthma you may:

- ◆ Wheeze– make a loud or soft whistling sound when you breathe
- ◆ Cough a lot
- ◆ Feel short of breath
- ◆ Have trouble sleeping because of coughing or having a hard time breathing
- ◆ Get tired quickly during exercise
- ◆ Have symptoms that are worse at night



How is Asthma Diagnosed?

- ◆ Your health care provider will ask you about your medical history and examine you.
- ◆ Breathing tests may be needed to see how fast or deeply you breathe. Another test tells how much air is moving in and out of your lungs.

How is Asthma Treated?

Asthma causes the muscles around your airways to tighten. This shrinks the airways and makes breathing harder.

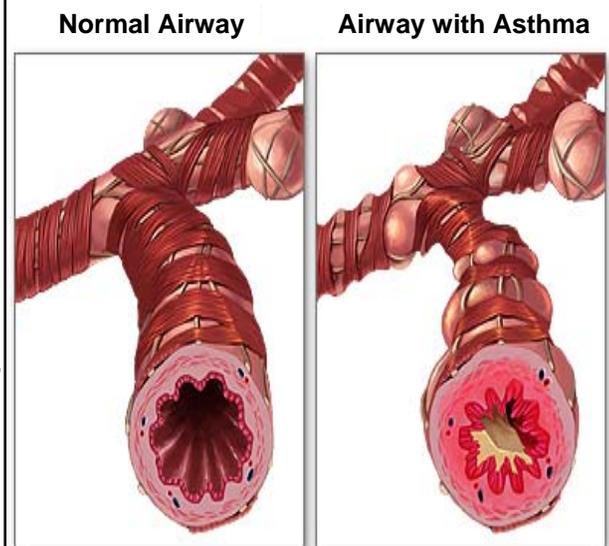
RESCUE INHALER- XOPENEX® (levalbuterol)

- ◆ Tightening or narrowing of the airways can happen fast, but it can also get better fast using a “rescue” inhaler.
- ◆ You should only need this type of inhaler once in a while. If you are using it daily, see your health care provider

CONTROLLER INHALER– FLOVENT® OR DULERA®

Asthma also causes long term swelling inside the airways. This swelling narrows the airway and makes breathing harder.

- ◆ The swelling is there most of the time, but a “controller” inhaler can help keep it down and keep your airways open. Use your controller inhaler every day or as directed by your health care provider.



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How Do I Avoid Asthma Attacks?

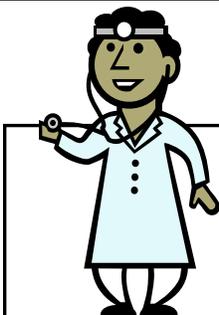
- ◆ Don't Smoke
- ◆ Be aware of things that can trigger an asthma attack and try to avoid them, such as strong emotions like anger, depression, or anxiety.
- ◆ Try not to catch a cold or the flu. Wash your hands often and get a flu shot every year
- ◆ Plan ahead and refill your prescription before it runs out

What Do I Do During an Asthma Attack?

1. Use your "rescue" inhaler right away. XOPENEX® (levalbuterol)
2. Sit down and loosen any tight fitting clothing. Do not lie down.
3. If you are not breathing better right away, take one puff of your "rescue" inhaler every minute for five minutes or until you are breathing better.
4. If you are not breathing better in five minutes, seek medical attention immediately.

Tell Your Health Care Provider How You Are Doing with Your Asthma

<p>Green Zone</p>  <p>Doing Well</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ No trouble breathing ▶ Can do usual activities
<p>Yellow Zone</p>  <p>Asthma is Getting Worse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cough, wheeze, chest tightness, or shortness of breath ▶ Waking at night due to asthma symptoms ▶ Can do some, but not all, normal activities
<p>Red Zone</p>  <p>Medical Alert</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Very short of breath ▶ Quick-relief medicines have not helped (Not breathing better after using "rescue" inhaler every minute for five minutes) ▶ Cannot do normal activities ▶ Symptoms are the same or worse after 24 hours in the Yellow Zone <p>CONTACT MEDICAL/CUSTODY TO BE SEEN IMMEDIATELY</p>



A big part of your asthma control depends on you. Health care staff is here to help you, but you must do your part to help them give you the best care possible.

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TWO WAYS TO USE AN INHALER

Open Mouth: many doctors prefer this, but some patients find it harder

The only difference is you do not put the inhaler in your mouth (Step 4 below)

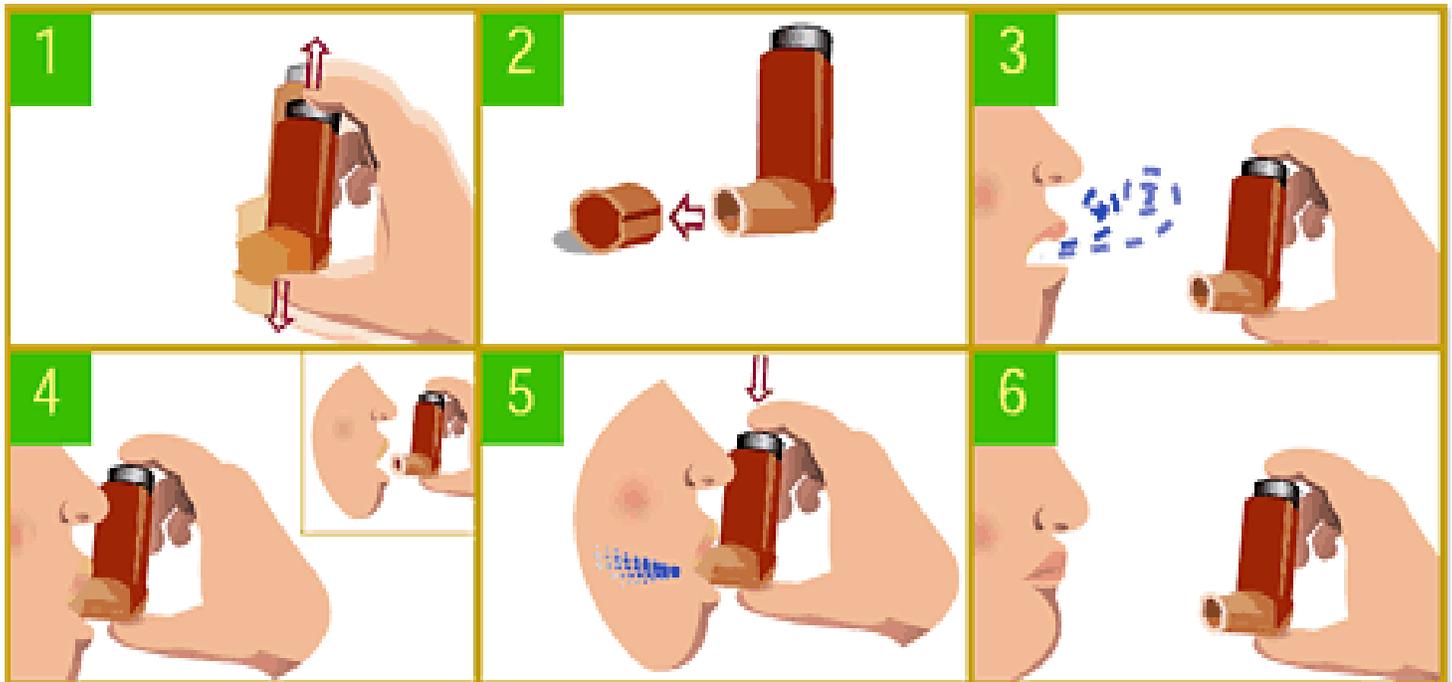
1. Shake the inhaler well before use (three or four shakes)
2. Remove the cap.
3. Breathe out, away from your inhaler.
4. Hold the inhaler about **1-2 inches from your mouth**.
5. Start to breathe in slowly, at the same time press the top of your inhaler to spray one puff and keep breathing in slowly until you've taken a full breath.
6. Hold your breath for about 10 seconds, then breathe out slowly.



If using controller (steroid) inhaler, rinse mouth after using.

Closed Mouth: Follow these six steps (see pictures 1-6)

1. Shake the inhaler well before use (three or four shakes)
2. Remove the cap.
3. Breathe out, away from your inhaler.
4. Bring the inhaler to your mouth. Place it in your mouth between your teeth and **close your mouth** around it. (Do not let tongue block the inhaler opening)
5. Start to breathe in slowly. Press the top of your inhaler to release one puff and keep breathing in slowly until you've taken a full breath.
6. Remove the inhaler from your mouth, and hold your breath for about 10 seconds, then breathe out. If using controller (steroid) inhaler, rinse mouth after using.



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HINTS: WHEN YOU FIRST USE YOUR INHALER/CLEANING YOUR INHALER

The first time you use your inhaler (or if you have not used it in 7-10 days), point it away from you and press the top of the inhaler to “spray” 2-3 “puffs” to be sure the inhaler is working well.

To clean your rescue inhaler:

- Take the metal canister out of the plastic case.
- Wash the plastic case twice a week with mild soap and water. Rinse with running water.
- Shake off excess water.
- Air dry.
- Put the plastic case and metal canister together when **completely dry**.

To clean your daily controller (steroid) inhaler:

- Remove the cap. Keep the canister in the case.
- Wipe the opening where the metal canister meets the plastic case with a damp cloth.

USING A SPACER

A “spacer” is a tube that you use with your inhaler to help the medication get into your lungs better. Not everyone needs a spacer, but if you are having trouble using your inhaler, your nurse or doctor may recommend you use a spacer.

How to use spacer:

1. Remove the cap from the inhaler and from the spacer device. Shake well.
2. Insert the inhaler into the open end of the spacer (opposite the mouthpiece).
3. Place the mouthpiece of the spacer between your teeth and seal your lips tightly around it.
4. Breathe out completely.
5. Press the inhaler one time (one puff).
6. Breathe in slowly and completely through your mouth. If you hear a horn-like sound, you are breathing too quickly and need to slow down.
7. Hold your breath for at least 10 seconds to allow the medication to get into your lungs.
8. If your dose is more than one puff then wait at least one minute before doing another puff.
9. When finished, put the caps back on the inhaler and spacer.
10. If you are using a controller (steroid) inhaler rinse your mouth with water.

