



Asthma Action Plan

Anyone with asthma should have an asthma action plan. An asthma action plan (also called a management plan) is a written plan that you develop *with your child's doctor* to help control your child's asthma.

The asthma action plan shows which medicines to take, when to take them and what triggers to avoid. Your child's plan:

- Describes how to control asthma long term with "controller" medicine
- Describes how to handle asthma flare-ups (attacks) with "quick-relief" medicine
- Explains when to call the doctor, go to the emergency room or call 911

The asthma action plan will not cure your child's asthma. However, the plan can help you keep asthma under control and know what to do when asthma symptoms get worse.

Share the Plan

The asthma action plan is important. Put it where everyone can see it. Give a copy to everyone who cares for your child, including:

- Teachers
- Day care employees
- School nurses
- Babysitters
- Coaches
- Camp counselors

Keep It Up To Date

Review the plan with your child's doctor at least once every six months. Let the doctor know if your child is in the yellow zone more than two days a week in case he or she wants to change the daily medicines.

If your child's doctor changes your child's medicine or dose of medicine, ask for an updated plan. Then, hand out a new copy to everyone who needs it.

The Three Zones

Most asthma action plans have three zones: green, yellow and red. The zone your child is in depends on the asthma symptoms he or she is experiencing.

Green Zone

If your child's asthma is well-controlled, then he or she should be in the green zone almost all of the time. The green zone means your child:

- Breathes easy
- Has a cough or wheezing less than twice a week
- Needs quick-relief medicine less than twice a week
- Can do physical activities without having a cough, wheezing or shortness of breath
- Sleeps through the night without coughing



Some children with asthma need medicine every day to make sure they stay in the green zone. This medicine is often called controller medicine. Use controller medicines as prescribed, and watch your child take them to make sure he or she is taking them correctly.

Yellow Zone

The yellow zone means that your child is starting to have some asthma problems. The yellow zone is when your child is:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- A little short of breath
- Having some trouble doing physical activities
- A bit tight in the chest
- Waking up at night with breathing problems

If your child has some of these symptoms, double check that he or she is taking controller medicines properly.

The asthma action plan will also tell you to add quick-relief or rescue medicines to your child's symptoms. Give these medicines as prescribed, and check to see if they help.

If the medicines do not help, the asthma action plan will have instructions on what to do next. This might mean calling the doctor's office or increasing the quick-relief medicine.

Red Zone

This zone means your child is having a lot of trouble with asthma. Your child is in the red zone if you see:

- Coughing fits (your child can't stop coughing)
- Breathing that is hard and fast
- Ribs when your child breathes in

The asthma action plan will tell you what medicine to use if you see these signs. **You should call 911 if the symptoms you see are severe or if your child has:**

- Trouble walking
- Trouble talking in sentences
- Blue or purple lips

Remember: Do not be afraid to call for help if you are worried or if you are not sure what to do. You and your child's doctor are a team, managing your child's asthma together.