

Childhood Asthma: Avoiding the Emergency Room

How You Can Help

One of the main goals of asthma is avoiding trips to the emergency room (ER) for breathing problems. You can help prevent severe asthma flare-ups and the need for emergency care by following your child's asthma action plan, avoiding triggers, taking controller medicines as directed, and calling your doctor as soon as an asthma flare-up begins.

Tips for Reducing Trips to the ER

- **Avoid triggers:** Your doctor can help you identify the triggers that might cause asthma flare-ups. Common asthma triggers include tobacco smoke, animals, dust mites, mold, pollen, perfumes, aspirin, extreme heat, cold air, exercise and respiratory infections.
- **Take long-term controller medications:** Your child should take long-term controller medicines as prescribed by the doctor, even when they are feeling fine. Skipping doses can cause the lungs to become more inflamed and increases the risk of more frequent and severe flare-ups.
- **Keep quick-relief medicines handy:** Many kids go to the ER simply because they did not have their quick-relief medicines available. Your child should have quick-relief medicine handy at all times. This includes making sure to keep the medicines at school, caregivers, sporting events, and while traveling.
- **Follow the Asthma Action Plan:** Your doctor can help you develop a personalized asthma plan outlining daily treatment, symptoms to watch for, and step-by-step instructions to follow during an asthma flare-up.
- **Call doctor:** If you notice frequent coughing or wheezing or quick-relief medicine is not lasting 4 hours, call the doctor.

Call First

Most asthma flares can be managed at home under the guidance of a physician by phone until your child is able to be seen during regular office hours.

You are never alone!

If your child is experiencing asthma symptoms, we can get you in for same day ill during regular office hours. If our office is closed, we have doctors at [Pediatric Associates, Inc.](#) that are on call. You can reach our office at:

Whitehall
(614) 501-7337

Hilliard
(614) 529-0771

Pickerington
(614) 864-3222

Lewis Center
(740) 657-8000

During an asthma attack or flare-up, your child may cough, wheeze, or have trouble breathing.

The key to stopping an asthma attack is recognizing and treating asthma symptoms early.

Steps to take if your child is having an asthma flare:

- **Give 2 puffs of your quick-relief inhaler (Ventolin, ProAir, Xopenex HFA with spacer or RespiClick) or nebulizer treatment every 4 hours.**
- **If there is no improvement within 15 minutes, give an additional 2 puffs of your quick-relief inhaler or nebulizer treatment and call our office immediately.**
- **If you are unable to reach our office or you are concerned that your child cannot wait any longer, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.**