



Asthma
Australia

Asthma

Things to Ask & Tell
your Doctor



Contact your local Asthma Foundation
1800 ASTHMA Helpline (1800 278 462)
asthmaaustralia.org.au



YouTube



Things to **tell your doctor**

Symptoms

- If you have had any night-time asthma symptoms, such as cough, wheeze or breathlessness, since your last check-up
- How many days a week you have had day-time asthma symptoms in the last month
- If your asthma has made it hard to keep up with normal activity
- If you have had any asthma flare-ups or attacks since your last visit
- If you cough, wheeze or sneeze or have symptoms such as, itchy nose or eyes, runny or blocked nose, throat clearing or snoring

Triggers

- Anything that seems to trigger/make your asthma worse
- What you do about your triggers and whether this helps
- How much exercise you do and any asthma symptoms during or after exercise
- If you have hay fever or other allergies
- If you have ever been affected by thunderstorm asthma

Medication & devices

- How often you have taken your reliever medication in the last month
- How often you take your preventer medication
- Show your doctor how you use your asthma devices and/or nasal spray
- If you are taking any medication to treat your hay fever
- If you are using any other medications or complementary therapies

General Health

- Any other changes in your health, e.g. quitting smoking, increasing exercise, weight changes, allergies, other health issues.
- For women, if you are planning a pregnancy or may be pregnant.

If you have a written asthma action plan, bring it to your appointment, so that your doctor can check it is correct and up to date.

Things to **ask your doctor**

1. How can I tell when my asthma is under good control?
2. How can I tell when I am getting a flare-up of asthma symptoms?
3. What medications do I need to take every day for my asthma?
4. Can I work out which triggers make my asthma worse and can I do anything about them?
5. I cough, wheeze and sneeze, am I on the right asthma medications and what hay fever treatment should I be taking and how often?
6. If exercise sets off my asthma, what can I do to control that, so I can keep active?
7. What do I do if my asthma gradually gets worse over a few weeks?
8. What do I do if I have a sudden or severe asthma flare-up (an asthma attack)?
9. Can you please check that I am using my asthma devices and/or nasal spray correctly?
10. Can I have a written asthma action plan (or can you check that my written asthma action plan is up to date?)
11. When should I see you again for an asthma review?

Before you leave your doctor, make sure:

- your medications have been reviewed, you know which ones to take and when and you have enough prescriptions until your next visit
- you can use your asthma medication devices correctly
- you have an up-to-date written asthma action plan
- you have booked another appointment for review

Asthma First Aid

1 Sit the person upright

- Be calm and reassuring
- Do not leave them alone



2 Give 4 separate puffs of blue/grey reliever puffer

- **Shake** puffer
- Put **1 puff** into spacer
- Take **4 breaths** from spacer

Repeat until **4 puffs** have been taken

Remember: **Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths**

OR give 2 separate doses of a Bricanyl inhaler (age 6 & over) or a Symbicort inhaler (over 12)



3 Wait 4 minutes

- If there is no improvement, give **4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever** as above

OR give 1 more dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort inhaler



4 If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance Dial Triple Zero

- Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving **4 separate puffs** every **4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives

OR give 1 dose of a Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes - up to 3 more doses of Symbicort



Call emergency assistance immediately - Dial Triple Zero (000)

- If the person is not breathing
- If the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse or is not improving
- If the person is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
- If you are not sure if it's asthma
- If the person is known to have Anaphylaxis - follow their Anaphylaxis Action Plan, then give Asthma First Aid

Blue/grey reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma



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