



## Asthma Education - Patients

### Understanding Your Asthma

Effective asthma management helps you stay active and symptom-free by controlling inflammation, preventing attacks, and maintaining healthy lung function while minimizing side effects.

When your asthma is well-controlled, you should be able to sleep, work, attend school, and participate in physical activities without difficulty breathing.

Studies show asthma management involves four key components: patient education, avoiding triggers, monitoring symptoms and lung function, and using the right medications.

### Your asthma medications fall into 2 categories

- **Controller Medications:** Used daily to reduce airway inflammation and prevent symptoms.
- **Rescue Medications:** Used when you have sudden asthma symptoms, but they do not control your asthma long-term.

### Why You Need Controller Medications

- **Prevents asthma attacks** by reducing airway swelling.
- **Decrease reliance on rescue inhalers**, helping you breathe better daily.
- **Lowers the risk of emergency visits and hospitalizations.**
- **Improves long-term lung health** and quality of life.

### Stay on Track

1. **Take your controller inhaler every day, even if you feel fine.**
2. **Use a reminder system** (alarms, apps, or notes) to avoid missed doses.
3. **Track your inhaler use** and symptoms in an asthma diary.
4. **Talk to your doctor** if you have side effects or trouble using your inhaler.
5. **Know your Asthma Action Plan**, so you can manage symptoms early.

### Important Reminder

If you rely on your rescue inhaler more than twice per week, it may be a sign that your asthma is not well-controlled. Speak with your provider to adjust your treatment plan.

***By following your prescribed medication routine, you can enjoy an active lifestyle and keep your asthma under control!***

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## Using Your Inhaler

Proper inhaler technique is essential for managing asthma effectively. Using your inhaler correctly and consistently can improve your asthma control and help you breathe better every day!

### Types of Inhalers and How to Use Them

#### 1. Metered-Dose Inhaler (MDI):

- Shake well before use.
- Breathe out completely.
- Hold the inhaler upright and place it in your mouth, sealing your lips around it.
- Press down on the inhaler and inhale deeply and slowly.
- Hold your breath for 10 seconds, then exhale slowly.
- Wait 30-60 seconds before repeating these steps if needed.
- Rinse your mouth after using inhaled corticosteroids to prevent thrush.

#### 2. Dry Powder Inhaler (DPI):

- **Do not shake.**
- Load the dose as directed.
- Breathe out fully away from the inhaler.
- Seal lips around the mouthpiece and inhale quickly and deeply.
- Hold your breath for 10 seconds, then exhale slowly.
- Rinse your mouth after using inhaled corticosteroids to prevent thrush.

### Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Not shaking the inhaler (for MDIs).
- Inhaling too quickly or too slowly.
- Not holding breath after inhalation.
- Not using a spacer (if recommended for MDIs).
- Overusing rescue inhalers instead of daily controllers.

### Risks of Overusing Rescue Inhalers

- Frequent use indicates poor asthma control.
- Overuse can cause rapid heartbeat, jitteriness, and decreased effectiveness.
- Overuse can lead to more severe asthma attacks over time.

### What to Do if Rescue Inhaler is Overused

- Talk to your doctor about adjusting your controller medication.
- Keep a symptom diary to track your inhaler use.
- Follow your Asthma Action Plan to manage worsening symptoms.

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