

How can I control my asthma?

You can follow this easy 4-step program.

Step 1: AVOID, or try to control exposure to, anything that you know triggers your asthma or makes it worse. These triggers may include:

- Air pollution, tobacco smoke, perfume or other irritants
- Allergens such as pet dander, pollen, dust and mold
- Infections (get a flu shot every year and avoid people who have a cold)

Step 2: Take your controller medicines *every day*.

- Most of the controller medicines need to be taken once or twice daily.
- If you have symptoms of asthma more than twice a week or if you wake up during the night with symptoms of asthma more than twice a month, your asthma is not under control. Ask your family doctor to help you get your asthma under control. Then, do your part and take your medicines regularly.

Step 3: Be prepared. Always have asthma medicine.

- Always carry your quick-relief asthma medicine with you when you leave home. Follow the instructions in the picture below.



How to Use a Spray Inhaler

Without a spacer

1. Take off the cap. Shake the inhaler.
2. Stand up. Breathe out.
3. Put the inhaler in your mouth or put it just in front of your mouth. As you start to breathe in, push down on the top of the inhaler and keep breathing in slowly.
4. Hold your breath for 10 seconds. Breathe out.

With a spacer

(A spacer, or a holding chamber, makes it easier to use a spray inhaler.)

1. Put the open end of the spacer in your mouth.
2. Spray the asthma medicine into the spacer one time.
3. Take a deep breath and hold it for 10 seconds.
4. Breathe out into the spacer.
5. Breathe in again, but do not spray the medicine again.

Step 4: Act fast if an asthma attack starts. Know the signs that an asthma attack is starting:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Tight chest
- Waking up at night

If you know what started the attack, avoid it if you can. Use your quick-relief asthma medicine. Stay calm for 1 hour to be sure breathing gets better.