



BACK-TO-SCHOOL WITH ASTHMA PREPARATION CHECKLIST



STEP 1

LEARN ABOUT ASTHMA

Well controlled asthma is the key to helping your child stay healthy and active.

- Take Asthma Basics. A free, online educational tool for people living with asthma or anyone who provides care for someone living with asthma, Asthma Basics teaches participants how to recognize and manage asthma symptoms, how to identify and reduce triggers, how to create an asthma management plan and how to respond to a breathing emergency.

Visit [Lung.org/asthma-basics](https://www.lung.org/asthma-basics) to take the free online course.



STEP 2

TALK TO TEACHERS, SCHOOL NURSES & COACHES

A visit or phone call to the school nurse should be your next step. Together, you and the school nurses, teachers and coaches, along with your child's health care provider can work to reduce asthma triggers and manage symptoms while in school.

- Ask the school nurse to explain and provide the required forms to ensure that your child will be safe and healthy during the school day.
- Discuss your child's asthma triggers and steps to reduce them while at school.
- Ask about the school's asthma emergency plan, and if coaches, teachers and staff are trained in how to recognize asthma symptoms and respond to a breathing emergency.
- Discuss the policies and practices to ensure immediate access to your child's asthma medication while at school.

Visit [Lung.org/asthma](https://www.lung.org/asthma) to learn more about asthma, and how to help schools become more friendly to students with asthma.

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STEP 3



DEVELOP AN ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

An Asthma Action Plan is a worksheet completed by you and your health care provider that is tailored to your child's needs. The plan includes a list of their asthma triggers and symptoms, the names of their medicines and how much medicine to take when needed. The plan also explains the steps to take to manage an asthma episode and a breathing emergency.

- Put an Asthma Action Plan on file in the school nurse's office and ensure it is easily accessible to anyone who may need to help your child use their inhaler.
- Ensure everyone who comes in contact with your child at school also has a copy, including teachers, coaches, school bus drivers and after-school care programs. Keep a copy for yourself to help you manage your child's asthma symptoms when he or she is at home. Share it with grandparents and sitters too.

Visit [Lung.org/asthma-plan](https://lung.org/asthma-plan) to download your Asthma Action Plan – available in English or Spanish.



STEP 4



SCHEDULE AN ASTHMA CHECK-UP

- Plan a visit to your child's health care provider for an asthma check-up. During this visit, review your child's asthma medicines, and inhaler technique and treatment plan. Also, ask the provider to complete any forms required by the school, and create or update the child's Asthma Action Plan.
- Consider asking your child's doctor if a peak flow meter would be a good tool to test and track your child's breathing ability. Also, if seasonal allergies are an issue for your child, ask the doctor for a treatment plan and medicines before seasonal symptoms set in. Kids with asthma should visit their health care provider at least once a year and more often when they are having symptoms.
- If your child uses a spacer or valved-holding chamber or a peak flow meter, ask your healthcare provider for a prescription for two; one can be kept at home and one at school. A peak flow meter at school will help the school nurse assess your child's asthma symptoms and a valved holding chamber can ensure that the medicine is getting into the lungs.
- Asthma medicine only works if it is taken correctly. Your healthcare provider can teach your child the correct way to hold and inhale the medicine. Inhalation technique should be reviewed at each visit.

Remember to provide all of the signed paperwork to the school nurse to ensure your child can use asthma inhalers as prescribed and participate in physical activity. Every child with well-controlled asthma can and should be encouraged to participate in physical activity.

If you have any questions or would like more information, call the Lung HelpLine at 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872). You can also join our free online support community, *Living with Asthma* to share information with other parents of children with asthma and asthma patients at [Lung.org/support-and-community](https://lung.org/support-and-community).

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