

ASTHMA IN SCHOOLS (K-12): Management and Emergency Information



what is asthma?

During an asthma episode:

- ⋮ The airways swell
- ⋮ Excess mucous production clogs airways
- ⋮ Muscles around the airways tighten

Symptoms of Asthma

Each individual has his/her own set of symptoms. If you know a student has asthma, or suspect they do, watch for these **warning signs** to indicate uncontrolled asthma or a potential asthma episode:

- ⋮ Cough (persistent or with physical activity)
- ⋮ Wheeze
- ⋮ Shortness of breath
- ⋮ Student reports tightness in the chest
- ⋮ Consistent use of inhaler
- ⋮ Tired at school (waking at night with asthma symptoms)
- ⋮ School absence due to asthma
- ⋮ Stomach aches
- ⋮ Headaches

Asthma Triggers in School Settings:

- ⋮ chalk dust
- ⋮ classroom animals
- ⋮ mold, mildew
- ⋮ strong odors (scented body products, markers, air fresheners, cleaning supplies, etc.)
- ⋮ art class and shop materials
- ⋮ cold temperatures
- ⋮ output from idling school buses and vehicles
- ⋮ dust mites
- ⋮ pollens
- ⋮ smoke
- ⋮ pests



ASTHMA IN SCHOOLS: Management and Emergency Information



medications

there are two basic types:

1 Quick Relief “albuterol”

- Used to reduce asthma symptoms, before exercise, and during an emergency!

- Ideally, everyone with asthma has access to quick relief medication at school

AN INHALER GIVES A METERED DOSE OF MEDICATION.

A SPACER INCREASES EFFECTIVENESS OF MEDICATION DELIVERY.

2 Controller

- Ideally, used at home daily to prevent inflammation and episodes.

- Not prescribed for everyone with asthma and often under utilized.



asthma & exercise

- Pre-medicate with quick relief medication (albuterol) 15 minutes prior to activity.

- Keep quick relief inhaler available and accessible during activity/physical education class.

- If symptoms occur during activity, stop exercise and utilize quick relief medication, if necessary.



ASTHMA IN SCHOOLS: Management and Emergency Information



healthy school environments



- ⋮ Keep Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) System running when people are in the room and don't obstruct air vents.
- ⋮ Ensure windows are open and air is flowing.
- ⋮ Keep building free of condensation, mold/mildew, dampness or leaks, and maintain average zone for humidity.
- ⋮ Avoid scented products (Plug-Ins, air fresheners, cleaning products, perfumes, etc.)
- ⋮ Minimize clutter and store art supplies and cleaning supplies in closed containers.
- ⋮ Clean classrooms daily, remove trash, and keep free of pests and vermin.
- ⋮ Minimize use of carpets and increase use of tile and hardwood floors.
- ⋮ Use fake plants or low allergen plants.
See http://calasthma.org/resources/show_resource/448/
- ⋮ Have a "no pets allowed" rule or minimize exposure.
- ⋮ Use only cleaning products approved by district, prioritizing the least toxic and/or green products.



