

MEDICATION TIPS

LIVING WITH ASTHMA & ALLERGY



Using your inhaler properly is important when you have asthma or COPD.

ACHIEVING BETTER ASTHMA CONTROL

CORRECT INHALER TECHNIQUE

Many people do not realise they aren't using their asthma or COPD inhaler (puffer) correctly.

Make sure your inhaler technique is correct. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or asthma educator to check, download a fact sheet, or watch the simple online How-To-Videos on the National Asthma Council Australia website.

www.nationalasthma.org.au

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF YOUR ASTHMA MEDICATIONS

Ask your doctor, pharmacist or asthma educator about the role of each of your medications, as well as for written instructions on when and how to use them. Also make sure you know about the possible side effects of your medication so you understand what is and isn't normal. If you have any concerns about your medications, please speak to a health professional sooner rather than later.

HOW TO STICK TO YOUR ASTHMA MEDICATIONS

Following a personalised asthma action plan is the best way to manage your asthma. Ask your doctor to write one for you.

If you sometimes get confused, label your reliever and preventer puffers so you know which one is which.

If you have been prescribed preventer medication, including a combination therapy, keep taking it even when you feel well. It needs to be taken regularly and over a long period of time to work effectively.

Ask your doctor if your medication can be simplified. One way is to have the same type of inhaler for all your medications, so you don't have to get used to several different kinds. Make sure that you ask your doctor for an inhaler that you find easy to use. There are special aids to help you if you have arthritis or have trouble coordinating the 'press and breathe' kind.

Try to create memory aids for yourself, e.g. take your asthma preventer medications when you brush your teeth each morning and evening.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Ask your doctor or asthma educator about your child's medications so you understand what the medication does and when it should be taken.

Make sure you have a personalised asthma action plan for your child. Give a copy to your child's school or childcare and to anyone who regularly looks after your child such as grandparents and sports coaches

Check that your child's inhaler technique is correct and their asthma puffers are easy for them to use. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or asthma educator to show you or watch the online videos on the NAC website.

Using a spacer with their puffer will help reduce side effects like hoarseness and ensure better uptake of the medication. Ask your doctor or pharmacist which spacer is the most suitable for your child.

Most of the time, preventer medication can be taken before and after school, decreasing the need for teacher supervision and avoiding potential hassles from other children. Discuss with your child's doctor if need be.

As your child gets older, involve them in decisions about their asthma medication & management.