

Medication Tips



How to stick to your asthma medications

- Ask your doctor, pharmacist or asthma educator about the role of each of your medications. Ask them for written instructions on when and how to use each one.
- 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
- Know the 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.
- 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 long-term to work effectively.
- Ask your doctor if your medication regimen 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.

- Ask your doctor to give you an asthma inhaler that you feel comfortable with. There are special aids to help you if you have arthritis and 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.
- Make sure your inhaler technique is correct. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or asthma educator to check, or watch the simple online demonstration videos on the National Asthma Council Australia website (www.nationalasthma.org.au).

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 available on the NAC website.
- Using a spacer with your 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 times, preventer medication can be taken before and after school. This decreases the need for supervision by teachers and avoids any hassles from other children. Discuss this with your child's doctor if it is a problem.
- As your child gets older, involve them in decisions about their asthma medication and management.