

LEARN MORE  
AND GET **HELP**



**AAFA.ORG**

Visit the Asthma and Allergy Foundation for more on asthma symptoms and treatment.

**311 OR NYC.GOV/HEALTH**

Call **311** or go to **nyc.gov/health** to ask for your own Asthma Action Kit.

**1.800.303.9626**

Call the MetroPlus Health Plan at **1.800.303.9626** and ask to speak to one of our Health Educators for help managing your asthma.



METROPLUS.ORG 1.855.809.4073  
160 Water Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10038



For information about  
MetroPlus Health Plan call  
**1.800.475.METRO.**

**MetroPlus.org**

 [facebook.com/MetroPlusHealth](https://facebook.com/MetroPlusHealth)

 [twitter.com/MetroPlusHealth](https://twitter.com/MetroPlusHealth)

 [youtube.com/HHCMetroPlusHealth](https://youtube.com/HHCMetroPlusHealth)

# LIVING WITH **ASTHMA**



WHAT IS YOUR  
ASTHMA  
ACTION PLAN?



**MetroPlus.org**

# What is ASTHMA?

Asthma is a long-term lung disease. It causes your airways to narrow, which makes it hard to breathe. It causes wheezing, shortness of breath and coughing. Asthma usually starts during childhood.

## How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will measure your lung function using spirometry. During this test, you may be asked to pinch your nostrils closed. Then, you take a deep breath in and breathe out as hard as you can into a tube called a spirometer.

## Is there a cure?

No, but you can manage your asthma with medicine and lifestyle changes. Most importantly, avoid your asthma triggers and create an asthma action plan with your doctor.

## Is it safe for me to exercise?

Exercising with asthma is safe, but some precautions are needed. Talk to your doctor if exercise is difficult for you. Your asthma action plan may need to be altered. Exercise is important for any healthy lifestyle, so do not avoid it entirely.

# Talk to Your Doctor: ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

If you have asthma, you must have a personalized asthma action plan. Partner with your doctor to create a plan that works for you and your lifestyle. Your doctor may suggest you track day-to-day changes in your breathing using a peak flow meter.

Your asthma action plan should include:

- A day-to-day treatment plan, including the medicines you take and when you take them.
- Your health care team's contact information.
- What to do in an emergency, as well as symptoms that indicate an emergency.

Asthma action plans tell you what to do during three phases ("zones") of your asthma:

- 1** The **green zone** is where you feel good and have no asthma symptoms. This zone is where you want to be. It is still important to take your medication, even if you're feeling fine.
- 2** The **yellow zone** means you're feeling symptoms. This is when you will likely need your quick-relief medication. Keep an eye on your symptoms to make sure they don't get worse.



- 3** The **red zone** is when your symptoms are severe. If your medication does not help, this is when you seek medical treatment.


If you notice signs that your asthma is getting worse, it's time to see your doctor and revisit your asthma plan. For example, if you are losing sleep because symptoms are waking you up, if you find yourself using your quick-relief medication more often or you're missing work or school. Another sign that you need to make adjustments to your treatment is your peak flow number changing or becoming very low.

# Your Treatment Options

- INHALERS
- NEBULIZERS
- STEROIDS AND ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DRUGS
- BRONCHODILATORS
- QUICK-RELIEF MEDICATION

No matter which treatment you use to manage your asthma symptoms, it's important that you are doing it properly.

Bring your inhaler or nebulizer to your next doctor's appointment. Your doctor can check that you are using the correct technique.

				
Secondhand smoke is a common asthma trigger. Avoid people who are smoking. If you smoke, quit.	Dust mites are tiny bugs found in most homes. Use mattress and pillow covers to protect yourself from them.	Pollution from cars, factories and other sources can irritate your breathing. Pay attention to air quality forecasts on the news.	Furry animals can cause asthma attacks. Keep pets out of your bedroom. If possible, avoid furry animals entirely.	If mold causes your asthma, you can use an air controller or dehumidifier to help prevent mold growth.