A is for Asthma™ Tips for understanding your child's asthma

Ideas for Family Activities!
Staying Healthy, Staying Active

Millions of young children have asthma. With a good treatment plan and help from family and friends, children with asthma can lead healthy, active lives.

Your whole family can work together to keep your child’s asthma under control.

Visit sesamestreet.org/asthma for more information.
Download My Asthma Profile plus a special activity for kids!
Learn About Your Child’s Asthma  By learning more about asthma, you can help your child have fun and enjoy being active.

**WHAT IS ASTHMA?**
Asthma is a lung disease. Things called triggers easily irritate the airways in children with asthma. This makes it harder to move air in and out of the lungs, and it feels hard to breathe. *Source: American Lung Association*

**OULD MY CHILD HAVE ASTHMA WITHOUT MY KNOWING IT?**
This can sometimes happen. Your child might make a whistling sound when breathing or after playing actively. She might cough a lot after being outside in cold weather or when she’s asleep. You might think she has a cold, but she doesn’t get better. In cases like these, take your child to the doctor.

**CAN ASTHMA REALLY BE CONTROLLED?**
You can help control your child’s asthma. Every child is different, so work with your doctor to find out what your child needs to stay healthy.

**Spotting Asthma Signals**
When your child is having trouble breathing, he may show “loud” symptoms, which are easy to notice, or “quiet” symptoms, which are less obvious.

**LOUD SYMPTOMS can include:**
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness
- Whistling noise when your child breathes
- Saying things like “My chest hurts” or “I can’t breathe so well”

**QUIET SYMPTOMS can include:**
- Unusual sweating or paleness
- Restlessness during sleep
- Tiredness
- Nervousness or shaking
- Sudden irritability or quietness
All About Triggers

Triggers are things that can bring on asthma attacks. Many things can be triggers, from pollen to cigarette smoke. Here are some easy ways to help keep triggers out of your home:

- Think about having fish or reptiles as pets instead of furry or feathered animals.
- Stuffed toys and security blankets can trap dust and dust mites. Try to keep only two favorite items on your child’s bed, and wash them weekly.
- Avoid burning wood in a fireplace or woodstove.
- Instead of carpets, use bare wood floors or small area rugs, which can help cut down on dust in your home.
- Wipe surfaces every day with a damp rag to get rid of dust.
- Keep bathrooms clear of mold and mildew.
- Get rid of things that have strong smells, such as perfumes or strong cleaners.

**USING THE IMAGES BELOW, TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THE THINGS THAT CAN TRIGGER HER ASTHMA. IF SHE KNOWS WHAT HER TRIGGERS ARE, SHE CAN TRY TO AVOID THEM.**
Your Asthma Team You and your child are not alone in managing her asthma. Your asthma team is there to help! Check out these simple tips to stay connected with your doctor, family, friends, and child’s caregivers.

TEAM UP WITH YOUR DOCTOR!

★ Take your child for regular checkups.
★ Write down any questions you and your child have and bring them along to each doctor visit.
★ Talk with your doctor to make sure you understand any medications your child needs. Your doctor might want her to use **controller medications** every day to control symptoms.
★ Your child might also need **rescue medications** to help quickly if she has an attack. Make sure your child carries them when leaving the house.
★ Let your doctor know right away if your child’s condition changes.

KEEP BUILDING YOUR TEAM!

★ Let your team know about your child’s asthma and what they can do if she has trouble breathing.
★ Download and print “My Asthma Profile” at [sesamestreet.org/asthma](http://sesamestreet.org/asthma). Fill out the sheet and give a copy to anyone who takes care of your child.

LEARN THE ASTHMA ACTION PLAN!

Help your child learn the Asthma Action Plan. If he has trouble breathing, he should:

★ Sit Down
★ Stay Calm
★ Ask for Help
Staying Healthy!
Look at the pictures and talk about the things that the Sesame friends do to stay healthy. Then draw a picture of something you do to stay healthy!