



# Asthma Coalition of Greater Lowell Newsletter Fall 2017

## How to make sure your asthmatic child is safe at school

As the school season begins, it is important to make sure your child knows how to keep him/herself safe while on schoolgrounds. According to the American Lung Association, asthma is responsible for more than 10 million lost school days every year across the nation. That's more than 27,000 years. So, how can you help reduce this number?

First, let the school know your child has asthma, so they can make accommodations for them. Also, make sure your child has their inhaler on them at all times, and knows how to use it properly, unless they are around 5-7 years old, in which case have a nurse hold on to the child's inhaler. This may seem obvious, but not everyone knows that by law, in all 50 states, a child can possess an inhaler and, in the event of an emergency, can self administer their medicine. Lastly, see if the school has teachers, or other faculty members who know how to deal with a student who is having an asthmatic episode.

(Source of information: <http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/asthma/living-with-asthma/creating-asthma-friendly-environments/asthma-in-schools.html?referrer=http://www.lung.org/search-results.html?q=asthma%20and%20food?referrer=http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/asthma/living-with-asthma/creating-asthma-friendly-environments/asthma-in-schools.html>)

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Many resources are available about asthma: American Lung Association, Noattacks.org, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America](http://www.asthmaandallergy.org) New England Chapter, Allergy and Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, Asthma Action America, New England Asthma Regional Council (ARC) For statistics on asthma and other environmental issues in Massachusetts, visit the Massachusetts Environmental Public Health Tracking website. Other sources: [www.makesmokinghistory.org](http://www.makesmokinghistory.org)

## Instructing children how to use inhalers.

It may seem like a daunting task, but teaching your child how to use an inhaler at school is crucial for your child's well-being. Make sure your son/daughter is fully aware that this is not a toy, and must only be used in case of an emergency. Describe to your child the proper method to take their medicine, and to make sure he/she is aware of the right time to use it. Tell them that they must have the inhaler on them at all times, that no one else must use it, and talk to a teacher, when he/she uses the inhaler due to an emergency.

(Source of information: <http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/asthma/living-with-asthma/creating-asthma-friendly-environments/asthma-in-schools.html>)

## Common asthma triggers at school to be aware of

There are plenty of things on school grounds which can cause an asthma flare up, these include, but are not limited to...

- air fresheners
- cold, or humid environments
- hamsters and guinea pigs
- pencil shavings
- typical food allergies
- mold
- running too much during recess
- walking up stairs

(Source of info: <http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/asthma/living-with-asthma/managing-asthma/reduce-asthma-triggers.html>)



## Back to School with Asthma Checklist (ALA)

(Source of information: <http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/asthma/living-with-asthma/creating-asthma-friendly-environments/back-to-school-with-asthma.html>)

## Facts about asthma in children

- Early signs of asthma develop when the child is a toddler
- It is the third largest reason why children have to go to the hospital
- A child is significantly more likely to have asthma if a parent had/has asthma
- The symptoms of asthma are very similar to other childhood chronic illnesses
- The American Lung Association offers many programs to help children with asthma

(Source of info: <http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/asthma/living-with-asthma/managing-asthma/for-parents-of-children-with-asthma.html>)

1. Develop an Asthma Action Plan with your child's pediatrician.

2. Mark all medications with your child's name, the name of the medication, and the medication's complete instructions.

3. Learn your school's asthma policies and emergency procedures.

4. Speak to your school nurse and your child's teacher about your child's asthma and review the Asthma Action Plan.

5. Provide the school with your emergency contact information and at least two back-up individuals.

6. Find out if your child can carry medications while at school. If so, fill out all permission forms.

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