Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#57 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

KICK ASTHMA

Take charge and control it



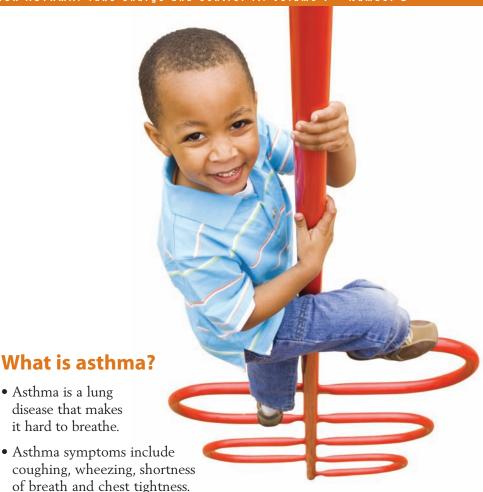
Take controller medicine every day for persistent asthma.

Stay away from asthma triggers, especially cigarette smoke.



- Available in Spanish and Chinese: call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health
- Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite nyc.gov/health
- ·需要中文服務 可電 311 或造訪網址 nyc.gov/health

Health



• People can develop asthma at any age, but it usually starts in childhood.

You can control it.

• Asthma is a lung disease that makes it hard to breathe.

- Asthma is a long-term (chronic) condition. People have it for many years.
- There is no cure but you can take charge and learn to control it!

Have a regular doctor

If you have asthma, see your doctor regularly, even if vou're feeling well.

- Let the doctor know if asthma interferes with sleep, work, school, play or exercise.
- Tell your doctor how often you have symptoms, such as coughing or wheezing, and how often you use your quick-relief inhaler.



Use the right medicines

Spacers are important.

Many asthma medicines are inhaled. If you use a metered dose inhaler or pump, be sure to use a spacer.

Use controller medicines to prevent attacks.

- People with persistent asthma should use controller medicines.
- You have persistent asthma if you have:
 - Daytime symptoms more than twice a week, or
 - Nighttime symptoms more than twice a month.
- Controllers must be taken every day, even when you feel well.
- The most effective controllers are called "inhaled corticosteroids." They are prescribed in small doses and are safe to use.
- Inhaled corticosteroids are NOT the same as anabolic steroids that some people use unsafely to build muscles.

Use quick-relief medicines to relieve symptoms.

Your doctor may also recommend medicine for hay

- Carry quick-relief medicine all the time in case of an emergency.
- Unlike controllers, quick-relief medicines don't prevent attacks.

Allergy control.

fever and other allergies that can trigger asthma.

Lead a healthy, active life!

With asthma under control, you can:

- Participate fully in sports and other physical activities.
- Not miss school or work because of asthma.
- Sleep through the night.
- Not have severe asthma symptoms.
- Not need to go to the emergency room or be hospitalized because of asthma.

Watch out for triggers





Tobacco smoke is a serious asthma trigger.

• Different people have different triggers. Learning what triggers *your* asthma is important for control.

• Colds and upper respiratory infections are major triggers for children.

 Other triggers can include furry pets (especially cats), cockroaches, mice, dust mites, cold weather, strong fumes, mold and mildew, and pollen.







- If you have persistent asthma, take controller medicine *every day* to prevent asthma attacks.
- Establish a smoke-free home. If you smoke, call 311 for free help to quit.
- Get a flu shot every year.
- Reduce clutter, and get rid of roaches and mice safely (without using sprays or strong pesticides).
- Vacuum rugs, curtains and furniture, and wash bedding in hot water.
- When pollen or air pollution rises, close your windows.
 Use an air conditioner if possible.



Asthma Action Plan

- Ask your doctor for a written plan to help you manage your asthma at home or at school.
- An Asthma Action Plan is easy to follow, even for children. It tells you when and how to take your asthma medicine.
- Call 311 to get one for your doctor to fill out.

Asthma Medicine at School

- A Medication Administration Form allows your child to receive medicine at school when necessary.
- Every school-aged child with asthma should have a Medication Administration Form.
- Call 311 to get one for your doctor to fill out.

More Information and Help

- NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: www.nyc.gov/health/asthma or call 311 and ask for Asthma
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/asthma
- American Lung Association of the City of New York: www.alany.org
- American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org/healthtopics/asthma.cfm
- American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology: www.aaaai.org/patients/gallery
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America: www.aafa.org
- World Trade Center Health: nyc.gov/911healthinfo



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VOLUME 7, NUMBER 2

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For Non-Emergency New York City Services Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages