



Lifestyles for Asthma for children and teens

What's triggering your child's asthma?

If you have asthma, you have triggers. It may be really obvious when you come into contact with one.

It's important to know what your child's asthma triggers are and learn ways to control them,

especially the indoor ones, as the weather gets colder and we spend more time inside.

Check the list of triggers below and learn about ways you can improve the quality of your indoor air.

Trigger	Tips to help
Mold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep humidity in the home between 30 percent and 50 percent. • Use exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathroom. • Vent clothes dryers to the outside. • Use a dehumidifier in the basement. Clean condensation pan often. • Watch for and repair water leaks.
Dust mites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash bedding weekly in hot water. • Cover mattress and pillow in airtight, allergy-proof covers. • Freeze stuffed toys overnight each week. • Dust the bedroom, including damp-wiping the mattress cover weekly.
Pets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not have warm-blooded pets in the home. If you must have a pet, wash the pet every week, and don't let the pet sleep in the bedroom. • Avoid homes that have pets.
Tobacco smoke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage all smokers in your home to quit. • Do not smoke in the car, house or bedroom or allow others to do so. • Avoid second-hand smoke, and ask to sit in the nonsmoking section.
Chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use room deodorizer or potpourri. • Use unscented detergent, personal care products and cleaning supplies. • Stay out of the house when it is being painted. • Store chemicals carefully away from ventilation sources, and follow the label directions.
Cockroaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store food in airtight containers. • Keep food cleaned up from countertops, cupboards, toasters and other surfaces. • Keep floors clean. • Use poison baits or traps rather than spray pesticides.

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Trigger	Tips to help
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure woodstove doors and vents fit tightly.• Do not use bedding and clothes made with feathers or down.• Do not bring flowers or plants into the house.• Avoid using appliances such as space heaters.• Maintain heating and air conditioning systems — changing or cleaning filters, following label instructions.

Source: Asthma Initiative of Michigan for Healthy Lungs

What to do when your child gets sick

Because it's almost impossible to avoid the occasional cold, here's what to do when your child gets sick:

- Keep your child home from school or day care. This will help keep others from getting sick.
- Make sure your child eats well, gets plenty of rest and fluids.
- Follow your child's asthma action plan. Take medicine as needed.
- Watch for signs that tell you your child needs to be seen by the doctor. Is your child having trouble breathing or complaining of a sore throat? Also, call the doctor right away if your child has high fever, sharp pain when taking deep breaths or is coughing up phlegm.
- Have your child continue taking daily long-term control medicine according to the doctor's directions on the asthma action plan.

Remember, if your child is having frequent asthma symptoms, his or her asthma might not be under good control. Make an appointment to talk to your child's doctor about how a daily long-term control medicine might help prevent asthma symptoms from developing.

When taken every day, long-term control (also called anti-inflammatory) medicine can prevent asthma episodes by making your child's lungs less sensitive to asthma triggers. It helps reduce or prevent irritation and swelling of the air passages in your child's lungs.



Stay healthy this flu season

Did you know that asthma in children is often triggered by illness? In fact, upper respiratory infections, which include the common cold and flu, cause 85 percent of the asthma attacks in young children.

Because of the risk of flu complications, you should protect your child with a flu shot each fall.

- You can also protect yourself and your child during the flu season by:
- Avoiding people who are ill
- Covering your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough
- Washing your hands often
- Using hand sanitizers when soap and water are not available
- Keeping your hands away from your face and mouth
- Eating well and getting plenty of rest


Symptoms of the flu:

- High fever
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Stomach symptoms



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention





Checkups

Has our child had the following screenings, exams and shots within the last year?

- Asthma Action Plan update
- Review quick-relief medicine
- Review long-term control medicine
- PFT (pulmonary function test)
- Flu shot

These are general suggestions. Check with your child's doctor about how often your child needs these services.



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