

## Important points for Caregivers to note...

In young children asthma symptoms may become worse either very quickly (within a few hours) or slowly worsen over several days. In some children a change in behaviour may be an indication of worsening asthma.

Eg. Loss of appetite, quietness, or clinginess.

It is important for caregivers to be aware of these changes.

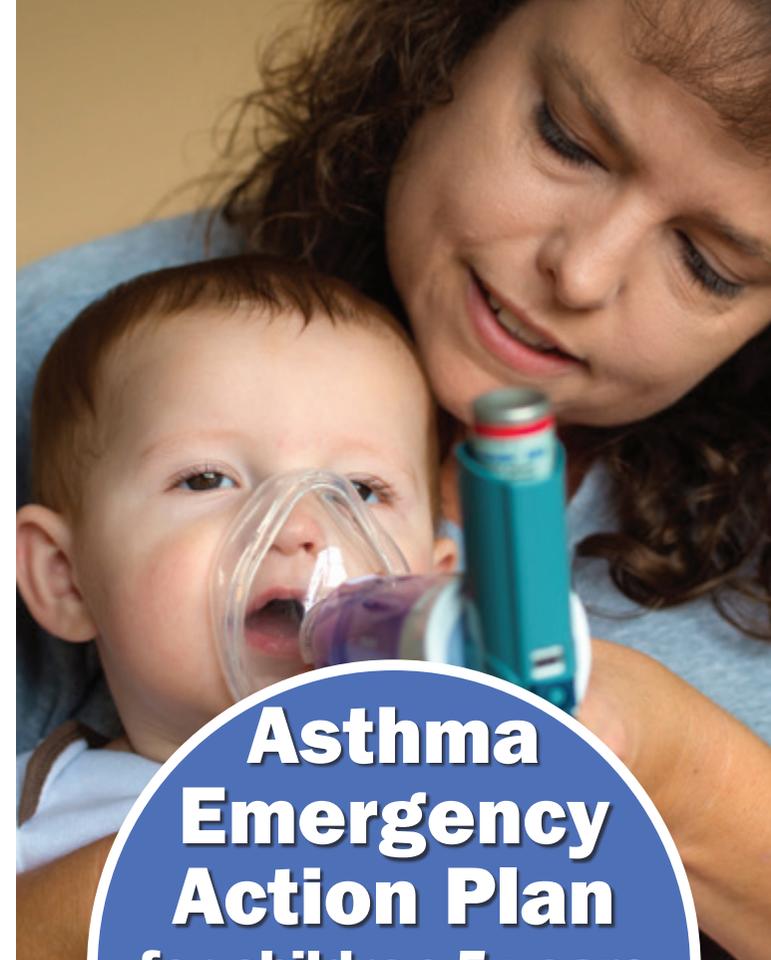
## Be aware of worsening asthma in these situations

- When your child develops a cold  
(This is a very common trigger in asthma)
- At the change of seasons
- Exposure to any of the triggers, which you know may worsen your child's asthma
- Playing outside on cold and/or windy days
- When excited or in stressful situations

**Always continue with preventer medication as prescribed even when well.**



**For further information please contact your local asthma society**



# Asthma Emergency Action Plan for children 5 years of age and under

Recognising an asthma  
attack and what  
to do!

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## How to recognise **MILDLY** worsening asthma symptoms

<b>Activity</b>	Child continues with usual activities. May be a bit quieter than usual.
<b>Wheezing</b>	Very slight. Sometimes may only be heard by putting your ear on child's chest.
<b>Note</b>	<b>Wheezing may not occur in all children with worsening asthma.</b>
<b>Muscle use</b>	Muscle at front of neck may be going in and out slightly with each breath.
<b>Breathing</b>	Breathing rate is normally between 20-30 breaths per minute. (Rate decreases as child gets older). May be slightly faster than usual.
<b>Cough</b>	May be coughing more during the night or when running/ jumping.
<b>Talking</b>	No noticeable change from usual.
<b>What to do</b>	Give 2-4 puffs of blue reliever inhaler, one puff at a time, via a spacer. If no improvement within 30 minutes give 6 puffs. If symptoms return or become worse within the next 4 hours contact Practice Nurse/GP or Accident & Medical Clinic for advice.

Asthma in children can be controlled most of the time. This pamphlet is a guide for caregivers to follow when a child's asthma symptoms become more serious. You need to be able to recognise what is happening and know what action to take.

## How to recognise **MODERATELY** worsening asthma symptoms

<b>Activity</b>	Stopping to rest now and then. May have bursts of activity but still needs to rest more often than usual.
<b>Wheezing</b>	"Whistle" sound may be heard when breathing out.
<b>Muscle use</b>	Muscle at front of neck sucking in and out with breathing. Area below ribs sucking in when breathing.
<b>Breathing</b>	Breathing rate is noticeably faster than usual.
<b>Cough</b>	May be coughing frequently.
<b>Talking</b>	Needs to take a breath after 2-3 words or in the middle of a sentence.
<b>What to do</b>	Give 6 puffs of blue reliever inhaler, one puff at a time, via a spacer. If no improvement within 20 minutes repeat 6 puffs. If still no improvement within 20 minutes of 2nd lot of 6 puffs take the child to doctor or Accident & Medical Clinic <b>immediately</b> .



## How to recognise **SEVERE SYMPTOMS** **This is a serious situation**

<b>Activity</b>	Sitting very still, wanting to be cuddled/held. Not playing at all or normal activities severely reduced.
<b>Wheezing</b>	Obvious "whistle" heard when breathing <b>in</b> and <b>out</b> .
<b>Note</b>	<b>If at any time the wheeze disappears with no improvement in child's activity or breathing rate, dial 111 and ask for an ambulance. Give 6 puffs of blue inhaler (one puff at a time) through a spacer/ mask every 6 minutes until ambulance arrives.</b>
<b>Muscle use</b>	Muscles at front of neck, the area just under ribs, and the area between ribs will be sucking in and out with breathing. Child may hunch over.
<b>Breathing</b>	Breathing rate is very fast compared to usual.
<b>Talking</b>	Needs to take a breath after one or two words or not talking at all.
<b>Colour</b>	Lips and/or fingernails may look bluish.
<b>What to do</b>	<b>Take immediate action. If you are alone dial 111 immediately and ask for an ambulance. Give 6 puffs of blue inhaler (one puff at a time) through a spacer/mask every 6 minutes until seen by emergency services. If two people present, 1st person dial 111 for ambulance and 2nd person administer medication.</b>