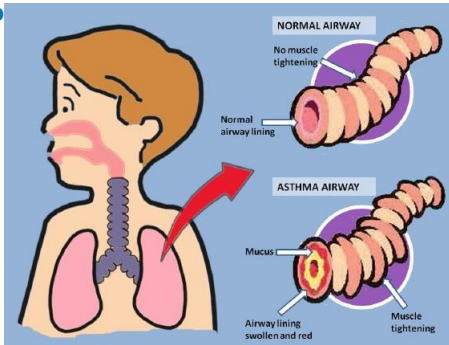


About Asthma

What is asthma?

As we breathe, air flows in and out of the lungs through the airways. Asthma is when:



- 1) Airways are swollen and mucus builds up (inflamed)
- 2) Airways become tight (constricted)
This can cause:
 - wheezing, shortness of breath or coughing with colds, after exercise or with triggers
 - ongoing cough without a cold; may happen in the middle of the night

If your child's asthma is well controlled, your child will:

- Be free of daytime and night time symptoms (no coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath)
- Able to participate in all school and physical activities
- Use Reliever/Rescue medications less than 3 times per week or not at all
- Not need steroids in liquid or tablet form (eg. prednisone, prednisolone, dexamethasone)
- Not need to visit the Emergency Room or stay in the hospital because of asthma

Did you know?

- The best way to know when your puffer is empty is by counting the doses
- Using a spacer is the best way to make sure the medicine goes into your lungs

Find out more <http://www.bcchildrens.ca/our-services/clinics/asthma> click on "Link to asthma handouts for patients"

You can help control your child's asthma by:

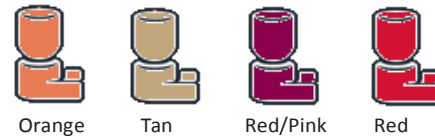
Knowing and using your child's medications

Asthma medications have been used for many years and have been shown to be safe and effective.

There are two main types:

1. Preventers/Controllers

- often called inhaled corticosteroids
- your child could also have a tablet or sprinkles
- treat and prevent ongoing swelling (also called inflammation) and reduce mucus
- start working in a few days, but can take several weeks to work fully
- must be **used regularly** even when there are no symptoms to prevent asthma attacks
- often come in puffers that are the following colors



2. Relievers/Rescue

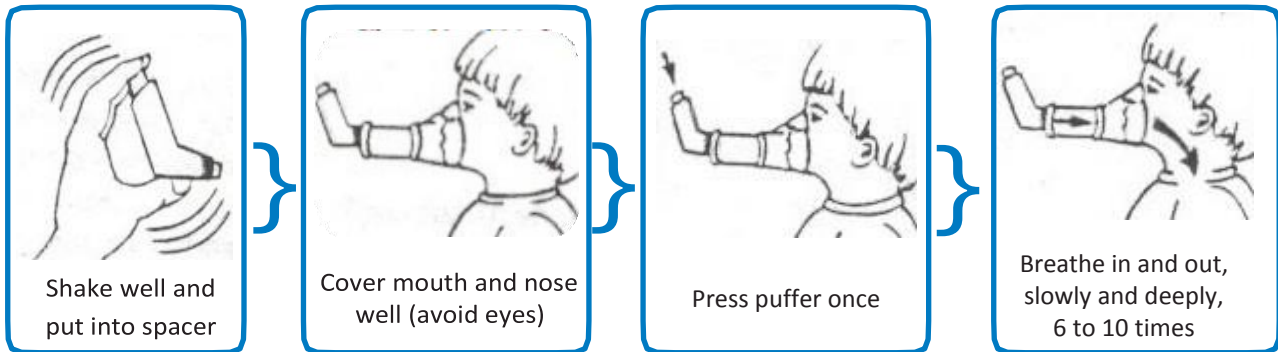
- used only when needed for symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, hard breathing, or tightness in the chest.
- work quickly to relax tight airway muscles to help your child breathe easier
- only last for 4 hours
- often come in puffers that are the following colors



Knowing and using your child's device

How to use a Spacer with Mask and a Metered Dose Inhaler (Puffer)

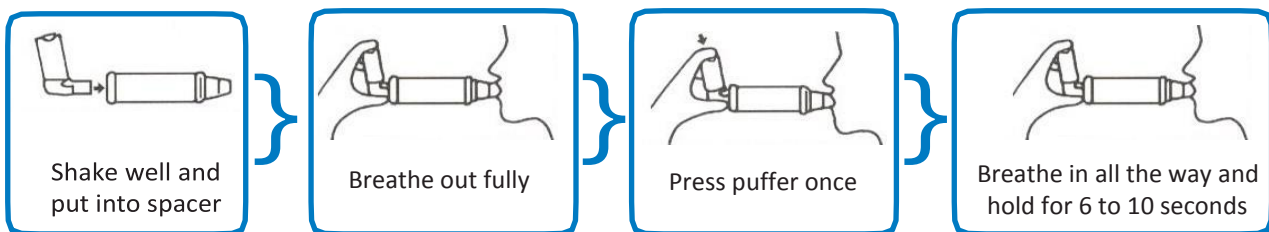
Suggested age: infant and child less than 5 years of age (or anyone unable to use a spacer with mouthpiece)



- If another puff is prescribed, wait 30 seconds
- Rinse mouth and wash face after use of preventer/controller

How to use a Spacer with Mouthpiece and Metered Dose Inhaler (Puffer)

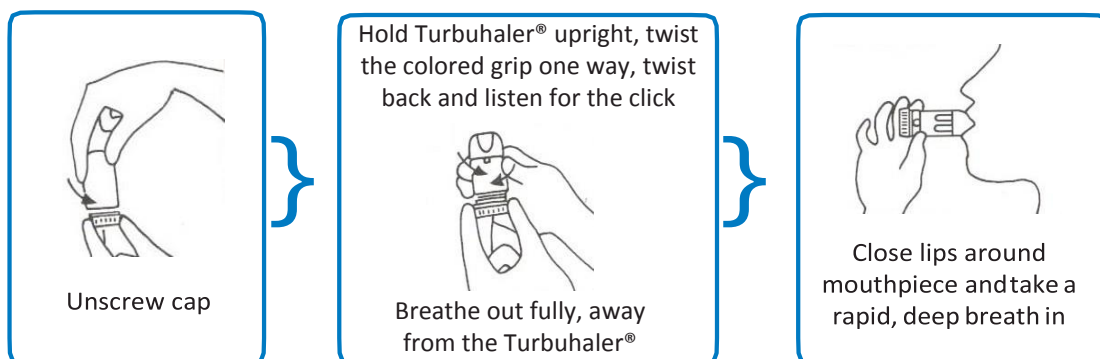
Suggested age: 4 years and up, if they can follow instructions to breathe deeply



- If your child cannot hold his/her breath, they can breathe in and out **slowly** and **deeply** 6 times
- If another puff is prescribed, wait 30 seconds
- Rinse mouth after use of preventer/controller (corticosteroid)

How to use a Turbuhaler®

Suggested age: 6 years and up



- Does not require a breath hold
- Rinse mouth after use of preventer/controller (inhaled corticosteroid)
- Do not breathe out into the Turbuhaler® (moisture in your breath can clog up your device)

Knowing and avoiding your child's triggers

Things that irritate (or bother) your child's airways are called triggers. **Triggers make asthma flare up.**

				
Smoke Keep your home and car smoke free. Wash smoke odours off of hands and clothes	Cold Viruses Wash hands often; ask your doctor about a flu shot	Animal Dander Avoid and keep pets with fur, hair or feathers out of the house	Pollen Close windows during pollen season	Dust Mites Reduce dust, use allergen barriers for pillow and mattress, reduce clutter
				
Mold Indoors - keep bathrooms & basements dry; Outdoors - avoid decomposing garden waste	Air Pollution Stay inside on high smog days and exercise inside	Strong Smells Avoid perfumes, scented cleaners & other fumes	Emotions Find ways to relieve stress and strong emotions (anger, crying) Try deep breathing and relaxing activities	Weather Changes May trigger asthma (cold dry air, hot humid weather, or thunderstorms)



Regular exercise is good for your child's health. If your child has symptoms with exercise, it may mean that his or her asthma is not well controlled; see your action plan or see your doctor or asthma clinic for advice



Go to the Emergency Department if:

You are using your child's Reliever/Rescuer medications (usually blue) every 4 hours or more often and:

- The skin at the base of your child's neck, between the ribs or below the breast bone pulls in with breathing.
- Your child has no energy to play or even move around.

Call 911 if:



Your child has severe symptoms: breathing very fast, gasping for breath, having difficulty speaking, blue-grey lips or fingernails

Give Reliever/Rescue medications until help arrives.

For information:

Control Asthma Now!

www.ucalgary.ca/icancontrolasthma

About Kids Health, under Asthma

www.aboutkidshealth.ca

Asthma Society of Canada www.asthma.ca

Asthma Clinic <http://www.bcchildrens.ca/our-services/clinics/asthma>

To stop smoking www.quitnow.ca



If you have any questions, call HealthLink BC, a 24 hour nursing advice line, at 8-1-1 from anywhere in BC or look up www.healthlinkbc.ca