

# Managing Your Asthma



## TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR ASTHMA

Asthma is a long-term disease that can be controlled with appropriate treatment.

### Good asthma control will

- Prevent chronic and troublesome symptoms, such as coughing and shortness of breath
- Reduce your need for quick-relief medicines
- Help you maintain good lung function
- Help you maintain your normal activity level and sleep through the night
- Prevent asthma attacks that could result in an emergency room visit or hospital stay

### Take an active role to control your asthma

- Work with your doctor to treat other conditions that can interfere with managing your asthma
- Avoid things that make your asthma worse (asthma triggers). However, a trigger you should not avoid is physical activity. Physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Talk with your doctor about medicines that can help you stay active
- Work with your doctor and other healthcare providers to create and follow an asthma action plan

## KNOW YOUR ACTION PLAN

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An asthma action plan is a written document that you and your doctor develop to help control your asthma.

### It gives guidance on

- Taking your medicines properly
- Avoiding asthma triggers (except physical activity)
- Tracking your level of asthma control
- Responding to worsening symptoms
- Seeking emergency care when needed

## TAKE THE MEDICINE YOUR DOCTOR PRESCRIBES

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**Asthma is treated with 2 types of medication—long-term control or maintenance medicine and quick-relief or rescue medicine.**

- **Rescue medicines:** These are medicines that you can take to help you catch your breath when your usual symptoms suddenly get worse
  - Can quickly help you breathe easier
  - Work fast and last about 4 to 6 hours
  - Include bronchodilators (bronk-oh-die-lay-ters)
- **Maintenance medicines:** You can take maintenance medicines every day to help you keep symptoms under control. This type of medicine
  - Lasts 4 to 24 hours
  - May help reduce the need for your rescue medicine
  - Includes bronchodilators that you take through an inhaler
  - Includes combination medicines that you take through an inhaler

It's important to take your maintenance medicine every day, even if you are breathing and feeling well.

**Rescue medicines should be taken when breathing symptoms suddenly become worse. However, if you are using your rescue medicines every day to prevent symptoms, you need to see your doctor, who may prescribe additional maintenance medicine.**

