

# Asthma Medications

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There are two main types of medicines for treating asthma. They are called **Quick-Relief** and **Controller**.

## Quick-Relief Medications

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Everyone with asthma should have a Quick-Relief Medication. These medications:

- Work quickly to relieve asthma symptoms and attacks.
- Quickly make it easier to breathe.
- Help open airways.
- Should be used as directed by your doctor on your written asthma management plan.

## Controller Medicines

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Almost all people with asthma also need one or more controller medicines. Some persons with asthma may be able to step down off of these medications if lung studies and symptoms show they are doing better. This can be determined by your doctor. **DO NOT** stop these medications on your own; your asthma will get worse. You may even be surprised by an asthma attack or lung infection.

- All asthma controller medications help reduce the swelling and irritation inside the airways, called inflammation.
- Controller medications, when used regularly, will reduce the number of flare-ups and help you control your asthma symptoms. You will be more able to exercise without problems too.
- The medications are taken each day. Take them even when you feel fine.

## Remember to:

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- **Keep your quick-relief inhaler and spacer with you at all times.** This includes children. Inhalers can be used by children with a spacing device. Spacing devices come with masks for smaller children. Inhalers are easier to carry with you than breathing machines and are just as good when good technique is used to take them. Usually 4–8 puffs of an inhaler equal one breathing treatment.
- **Develop an Asthma Management Plan with your doctor at your next visit.** These should be reviewed and updated if needed every 6 months. They have instructions on when to call your doctor and how to take your asthma medications should your symptoms get worse. They also tell you how to manage your asthma from day to day.

*Source: 2017 GINA Report, Global Strategy for Asthma Management and Prevention*