

# Tackle Asthma Playbook



Your game plan so you can  
exercise safely with asthma



Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America

 rashadjennings  
FOUNDATION

## 1

## Have an Asthma Action Plan

Your doctor might have you take medicine to treat your asthma. You may have more than one medicine. You might need to take one medicine often to prevent symptoms. You may need to take another medicine when you have symptoms. Your doctor will give you a written Asthma Action Plan. This plan tells you what medicines to take and when to take them.

### ASTHMA ACTION PLAN



Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America  
aafa.org

Name:	Date:
Doctor:	Medical Record #:
Doctor's Phone #: Day	Night/Weekend
Emergency Contact:	
Doctor's Signature:	

The colors of a traffic light will help you use your asthma medicines.



**GREEN** means Go Zone!  
Use preventive medicine.  
**YELLOW** means Caution Zone!  
Add quick-relief medicine.  
**RED** means Danger Zone!  
Get help from a doctor.

Personal Best Peak Flow: \_\_\_\_\_

GO	Use these daily controller medicines:												
<b>You have <i>all</i> of these:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breathing is good</li> <li>No cough or wheeze</li> <li>Sleep through the night</li> <li>Can work &amp; play</li> </ul>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>MEDICINE</th> <th>HOW MUCH</th> <th>HOW OFTEN/WHEN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN/WHEN									
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Peak flow: from _____ to _____ For asthma with exercise, take: _____													
<b>CAUTION</b>	Continue with green zone medicine and add: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>MEDICINE</th> <th>HOW MUCH</th> <th>HOW OFTEN/ WHEN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN/ WHEN									
MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN/ WHEN											
<b>You have <i>any</i> of these:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First signs of a cold</li> <li>Exposure to known trigger</li> <li>Cough</li> <li>Mild wheeze</li> <li>Tight chest</li> <li>Coughing at night</li> </ul>	Peak flow: from _____ to _____ CALL YOUR ASTHMA CARE PROVIDER.												
<b>DANGER</b>	Take these medicines and call your doctor now. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>MEDICINE</th> <th>HOW MUCH</th> <th>HOW OFTEN/WHEN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN/WHEN									
MEDICINE	HOW MUCH	HOW OFTEN/WHEN											
<b>Your asthma is getting worse fast:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medicine is not helping</li> <li>Breathing is hard &amp; fast</li> <li>Nose opens wide</li> <li>Trouble speaking</li> <li>Ribs show (in children)</li> </ul>	Peak flow: reading below _____												

**GET HELP FROM A DOCTOR NOW!** Your doctor will want to see you right away. It's important! If you cannot contact your doctor, go directly to the emergency room. **DO NOT WAIT.** Make an appointment with your asthma care provider within two days of an ER visit or hospitalization.

## 2

## Tackle Asthma in the Zone

Know your asthma zones so you can prevent asthma episodes. The zones are on your Asthma Action Plan. Follow your plan if you have asthma symptoms.



### GO ZONE (Green)

You have *all* of these signs:

- Breathing is good
- No cough or wheeze
- No chest tightness or pain
- Can sleep through the night
- Can work and play



### CAUTION ZONE (Yellow)

You have *any* of these signs and symptoms:

- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Chest tightness or pain
- Wheezing (a whistling sound when you breathe)
- Waking at night due to asthma symptoms
- Any symptoms after an exposure to a known trigger
- Breathing difficulty when sick with a respiratory illness



### DANGER ZONE (Red)

Your asthma is getting worse quickly, and you have *any* of these signs and symptoms:

- Quick-relief medicines are not helping
- Chest tightness or pain
- Severe shortness of breath
- Breathing is faster, slower, hard, or shallow
- Trouble walking or talking due to shortness of breath
- Ribs or stomach moving in and out deeply and rapidly
- Expanded chest that does not deflate when you exhale
- Shoulders hunched over ("posturing")
- Change in color on tongue, lips, around the eyes, fingertips, or nail beds – the color may appear grayish, whitish, or bluish depending on skin tone

Ask your parent to help you download AAFA's Asthma Action Plan in English or Spanish. Visit: [aafa.org/actionplan](http://aafa.org/actionplan)

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## Scope Out the Playing Field

Check the weather before you exercise outside. It is also good to check if the air is healthy to breathe while you exercise. Use a mobile app, website, or ask an adult for help. Sometimes it is better to exercise inside. This is true when the air is unhealthy or has a lot of pollen. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask if it is cold and dry outside.

### Air Quality Index Levels of Health Concern

Good

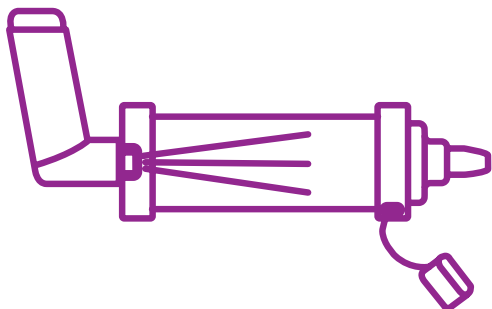
Moderate

Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups

Unhealthy

Very Unhealthy

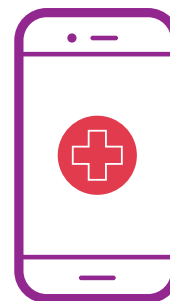
Hazardous



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## Bring Your Gear

Always carry your quick-relief inhaler, a spacer device (if your doctor tells you to use one), and a cell phone or smart watch with you (if you have one).



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## Prepare Your Body

Eat healthy foods.  
Drink plenty of water.  
Get enough sleep.

You may need to take your quick-relief inhaler before you exercise. This could help prevent an asthma attack. If so, your doctor will put the medicine on your Asthma Action Plan.

Be sure to warm up for 6 to 10 minutes before exercise. It is also good to cool down for 6 to 10 minutes after you exercise too.





## Take Care of the Player

Watch for signs of asthma before, during, and after exercise. Tell a nearby friend or adult if you are having an asthma attack. Be sure to follow your Asthma Action Plan.

Common asthma symptoms are:

- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Chest tightness or pain
- Wheeze (a whistling sound when you breathe)
- Waking at night due to asthma symptoms
- A drop in your peak flow meter reading (if you use one)



Asthma can be serious. Tell an adult or call 911 right away if:

- Your asthma symptoms are getting bad fast
- You took your quick-relief inhaler, but your asthma is getting worse



## Have Fun and Stay Healthy

Exercise is good for your body and mind. This is true even if you have asthma. Most people with asthma can lead healthy, active lives. Talk with your doctor if you have asthma symptoms when you exercise. Your doctor will help you manage your asthma so you can be active without symptoms.

**“I want kids to understand that you can live with asthma, you can overcome asthma, and you can tackle asthma like I did.”**

– Rashad Jennings, former NFL running back, New York Times bestselling author, and motivational speaker