

# Medications

**Montelukast:** This is a tablet or granules that blocks the effects of chemicals in the body that cause inflammation and narrowing of the airway. This does not work immediately and may take 4 weeks to show any effect.

**Spacers:** We recommend that inhaled medicines are given through a spacer to maximize the amount of medication inhaled into the lungs.

## What to do if you are concerned about your child

Once you are happy caring for your child's asthma at home, your child will then be referred back to their GP or practice nurse for ongoing management of their asthma.

However, if at any point you need more help or support you can contact the children's community respiratory nurses again.

**Children's Specialist Respiratory Service**  
Tel: 01254 732336

If your child requires medical attention please contact your GP or if necessary take your child to the nearest Urgent Care Centre, alternatively dial 999 in an emergency.

## Useful Websites:

[www.asthma.org.uk](http://www.asthma.org.uk) and [www.quitsquad.nhs.uk](http://www.quitsquad.nhs.uk)

If you require this document in an alternative format or language, please contact

**Polish**

W celu otrzymania tego dokumentu w innym formacie lub języku, prosimy o kontakt z

**Punjabi**

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

**Urdu**

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کی ایک متبادل شکل (فارمیٹ) یا زبان میں ضرورت ہے تو براہ مہربانی رابطہ کریں

**Bengali**

আপনি যদি এই প্রচারপত্রটি অন্য কোন আকারে বা অন্য ভাষায় চান, তাহলে যোগাযোগ করবেন

**Romanian**

Dacă aveți nevoie de acest document într-un format sau limbă alternativă, vă rugăm să contactați

**Lithuanian**

Norint gauti šį dokumentą kitu formatu ar kita kalba, prašome susisiekti su mumis



For general enquiries please contact the switchboard on: **01254 263555** or **01282 425071**.

**Tel:** 01254 263555.

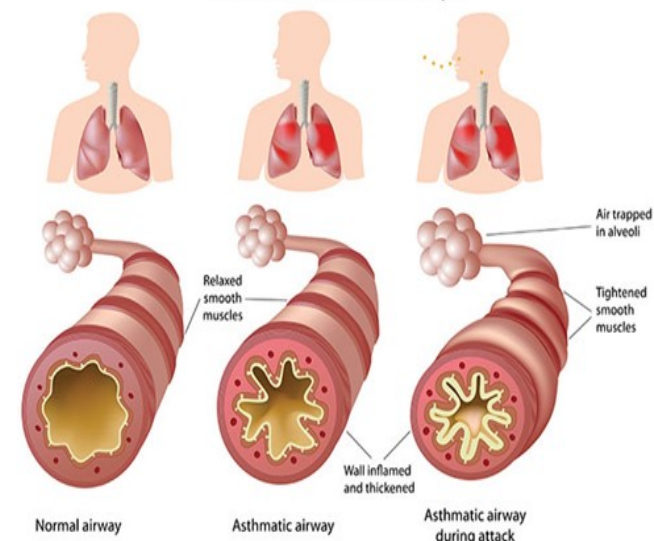
**Email:** [contact@elht.nhs.uk](mailto:contact@elht.nhs.uk)

**Website:** [www.elht.nhs.uk](http://www.elht.nhs.uk)

Version 1 12/2015. Review 12/2017

# Asthma

## Asthma and Your Airways



## What is asthma?

Asthma is a condition that affects the small airways (tubes) that carry oxygen in and out of the lungs. When you have asthma the airways are easily irritated and become red and swollen, this makes breathing more difficult.

# Triggers

Know the triggers that cause your asthma symptoms;

- ⇒ **House dust mites;** regular damp dusting, vacuuming and freezing of soft toys can reduce effects.
- ⇒ **Pets:** Keeping pets out of bedrooms and off furniture, along with regular grooming can help.
- ⇒ **Avoid tobacco smoke:** 40% of people with asthma get worse in smoky environments.
- ⇒ Avoid having **scented air fresheners and candles** in the home.
- ⇒ **Pollen:** using an antihistamine in summer may help, speak to your GP or Nurse.
- ⇒ **Exercise:** we don't advise that you avoid exercise, but you may need to take your blue inhaler before starting so you don't get wheezy and out of breath, causing you to stop.
- ⇒ **Emotions:** stress and excitement can be a trigger for some people, taking your blue inhaler with you can relieve symptoms.
- ⇒ **Colds, viral illnesses and flu:** having the flu vaccine early can help reduce the seriousness of flu for people with asthma. Taking your blue inhaler as soon as you start with cold symptoms can reduce the risk of an asthma attack.
- ⇒ **Mould and damp:** having homes well ventilated can reduce the risk of damp/mould, and in autumn fallen leaves can be a source of mould spores.

- ⇒ **Change in weather:** moving from warm to cold environments in colder months can trigger symptoms, wrapping up warm and using a scarf can help, your nurse may recommend taking your blue inhaler before going out.

# Managing asthma

Other ways to help manage your asthma better:

- ⇒ Remember to order repeat prescriptions and check expiry dates, especially ones you don't use often.
- ⇒ Take medications as prescribed, speak to your doctor or nurse if they are causing side effects or you need to know more about how they work.
- ⇒ Have yearly asthma reviews with your Doctor or nurse, more often if you are having lots of symptoms.
- ⇒ Ensure you carry your blue inhaler/spacer with you at all times, ask your doctor or nurse for a spare to keep at school/nursery.
- ⇒ Use your **Personal Asthma Action Plan (PAAP)** to help you decide what to do if you are unwell. Take it with you if you go to see your Doctor, Nurse or hospital, and show them, they can update with you if needed.
- ⇒ Ensure school are aware of your asthma and give as much information as possible about symptoms and medication, giving them a copy of your PAAP may help them too.

# Symptoms

You may experience one or more of these symptoms:

- ⇒ Shortness of breath, increased rate of breathing or not being able to talk in full sentences.
- ⇒ Coughing-especially at night and during/after exercise.
- ⇒ A tight feeling in the chest.
- ⇒ Wheezing-a whistling sound when you breath out.
- ⇒ Changing in colour, pale or blueness around mouth.

If you experience lots of symptoms when not unwell, or you are frequently unwell, speak to your doctor or nurse as they may need to review your medication.

# Medications

What medicines are available?

**Relievers** - blue inhalers. Relievers are the medicines that are used when you are having asthma symptoms. They relax the muscles around the airways so that they open wider and you can breathe more easily, the effects should last about four hours.

**Preventers** - usually brown, orange or purple inhalers. Preventers control the swelling and inflammation in the airways. They stop them from being so sensitive and reduce the risk of severe attacks. They need to be taken every day, even when your child is feeling well.