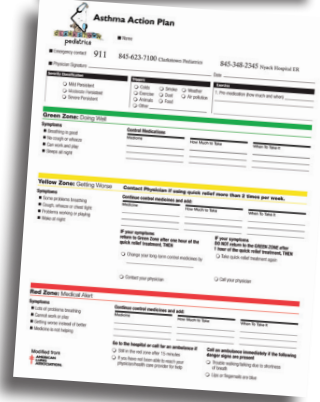
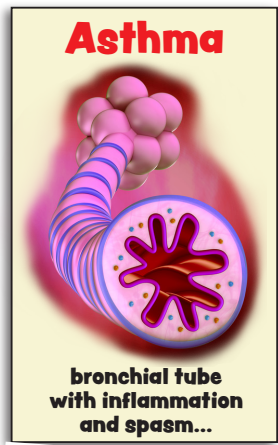


What Treatments Control Asthma?

by Doug Puder, MD



Control vs. Quick Relief:

Quick relief or rescue medication should always be available (see albuterol article on next page). But these medications won't help the real problem, airway inflammation. With asthma, air doesn't flow in or out of the lungs normally. Symptoms of chest tightness, deep cough, shortness of breath, or wheezing can develop. Controller medications treat inflammation or swelling in the airways (bronchial tubes). Children with persistent asthma should be able to have a full and active life. They should rarely (if at all) need trips to the emergency room or have any of these symptoms if we control their asthma properly.

Why can't I use my controller for quick relief:

Controller medications don't work immediately and require steady use to take effect. So an action plan needs to be made with your doctor for how long to continue controller medications. Usually controllers need to be given for a full month or a full season.

Which asthma medications control asthma?

Inhaled corticosteroid medications are the nationally recognized standard for asthma control in children and adults. They have been shown to be extremely safe at the doses we use, and are the most effective in treating airway inflammation.

Approved doses of these medications don't decrease a growing child's adult height. They don't weaken bones (bone density), or suppress the immune system. The danger of uncontrolled asthma far outweighs any risk of controller medication. Parents should not be afraid of these medications.



The most common first line controllers:

- FLOVENT QVAR PULMICORT (Budesonide) ASMANEX

Most common second Line controllers:

(Inhaled Corticosteroids with a Long Acting Beta Agonist)

- ADVAIR SYMBICORT DULERA

Third Line Controllers:

- SINGULAIR (Montelukast) tablets XOLAIR injections

What non-medical treatments can help?

Avoid smoke! Adults smoking anywhere in a child's home make the child's asthma twice as severe. We would love to see parents quit smoking, and can offer ways to help them. Many children with asthma have allergy to pets and dust mites. Let's discuss ways to decrease these irritants. Unless there are other signs of food allergy such as rash or diarrhea, asthma is not usually caused by foods. There is no evidence that alternative medical treatments can improve asthma control.

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