

# Managing Asthma

## What is asthma?

Asthma may be a lifelong lung disease. Asthma can't be cured, but it can be managed. We are your partners in managing your asthma. When you know what to do and you have the right tools, you can manage your asthma. This will allow you do more of the things you enjoy.

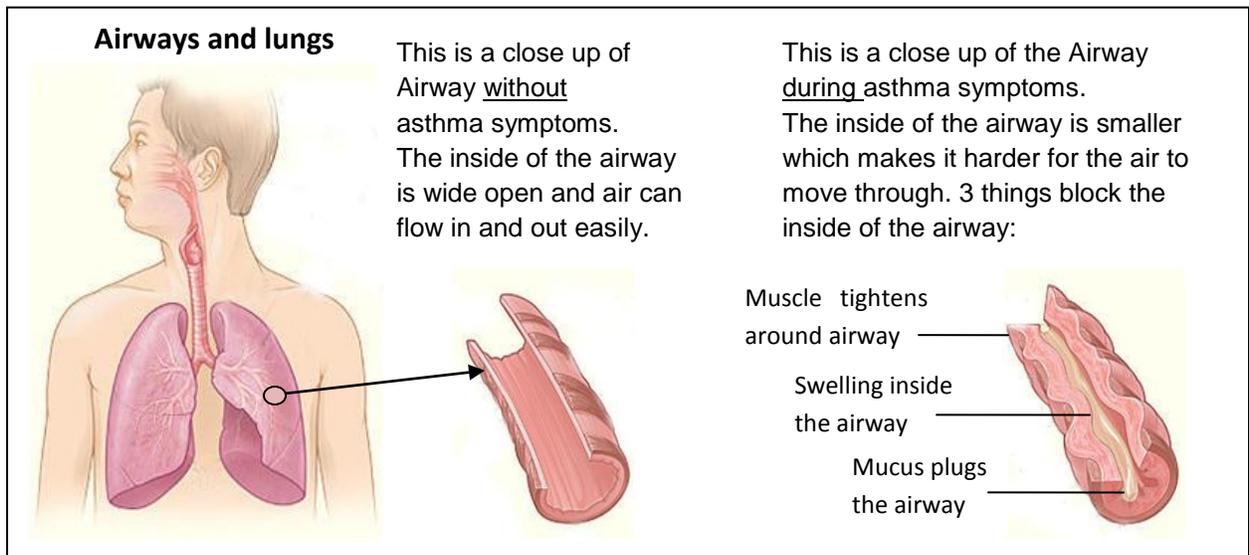


## This will help you learn to manage your asthma so you can:

- Be free of asthma symptoms
- Be as active as you want to be
- Sleep through the night
- Prevent asthma symptoms from starting
- Avoid going to the emergency department or hospital because of asthma

## What happens inside your lungs with asthma?

Asthma is a disease that affects the airways in your lungs. Next, we will show you what the inside of an airway looks like, with and without asthma.



## Symptoms of asthma

Symptoms can be different for each person. People can have one or more of these symptoms: Coughing, wheezing, the chest hurts and feels tight, it feels hard to breathe, and breathing may be faster than normal. With exercise, you may have coughing or wheezing or feeling short of breath.

## Triggers of Asthma Symptoms

- Triggers are things that cause you to have asthma symptoms. If you know what makes your asthma worse you can try to avoid it.
- Colds and flu are the most common triggers. You can avoid getting sick by washing your hands often and getting a flu shot every year.
- Other common triggers to avoid include: Tobacco smoke, pets with fur and feathers, house dust mites, mold and pollen, pests like cockroaches and mice, smoke, candles, and incense, and strong odors such as perfume, paint, cleaning products and scented soaps.

Learn what your asthma triggers are and try to avoid them



## Asthma Toolkit

The Asthma Tools that help you manage your asthma are:

### 1. An Asthma Action Plan

- An Asthma Action Plan tells you step by step what to do with your asthma.
- Every person with asthma should have an Asthma Action Plan.
- Ask your doctor for an Asthma Action Plan if you do not have one. Parents, ask for an extra copy to bring to your child's school or daycare.

### 2. A Peak Flow Meter

- A peak flow meter is a tool that measures how well air moves out of your lungs.
- It can help you know when asthma symptoms are starting, so you can start taking your asthma medicine right away.

An Asthma Toolkit will help you Manage your asthma.

### 3. Asthma Medicines

- Asthma medicines come as inhalers, pills, liquids or nebulizer treatments.
- There are 2 types of asthma medicines, **Rescue** medicines and **Control** medicines. Most people with asthma need to take both kinds of medicine to manage their asthma.
- If you have an inhaler, it is important to know how to use it the right way to be sure the medicine gets into your lungs.



Get an asthma checkup every 6 months, even if your asthma is well controlled. Call your clinic or doctor if you have questions or concerns about your asthma between your asthma checkups. If you would like more information, please visit the HCMC Asthma Resource website at: [www.hcmc.org/asthmaresources](http://www.hcmc.org/asthmaresources).