

## Asthma (Children)

### What is Asthma?

Asthma (sounds like *az-muh*) is when the airways (or breathing tubes) in your lungs become swollen and irritated. This makes it difficult to breathe.



If your child gets relief from the medication prescribed while in Emergency, the doctor will ask you to continue with this medication at home.

Your child will need to be seen at an Asthma Clinic (arranged by Emergency) or by your family doctor (arranged by you) within the next 24 to 48 hours. It is important for you to keep this appointment even if your child continues to do well on the medication.

### How to take care of your child at home

- Give your child the medication as directed by the doctor.
- Try to keep your child away from situations you know will make the asthma worse (such as pets, smoke, strong odours or sprays, pollen, etc.).
- **Do not** expose your child to tobacco smoke.

### To learn more, it's good to ask:

- Your family doctor
- HealthLinkBC - call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf and hard of hearing) or go online at [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca).

### When to get help

If you are concerned about your child's breathing, it is best to get help early. Do not wait until your child's asthma attack is severe.

### Go to the nearest Emergency Department if:

- Your child is breathing faster than usual
- Your child is having trouble breathing, or trouble getting his or her breath.
- Your child is very tired because they are working hard to breathe.
- You can hear a wheezing sound as your child breathes.

**Note:** Do not rely on this sign alone. Severe asthma can have no wheeze at all.

- Your child tells you things like "My chest hurts", "It is hard to breathe", or "There's a funny noise (wheeze) when I am breathing".
- You notice other signs, such as your child has a fever or is vomiting.

### Call 9-1-1 right away if:

- The skin around your child's neck and between the ribs is pulling in as your child breathes.
- Your child is unable to speak because they are breathing too hard or fast.
- Your child's lips or fingers are turning blue.