



A Child is Having an Asthma Attack

What are the signs?

Mild

- Coughing (a continual cough may be the only warning sign and should be treated)
- Restlessness
- Irritability
- Tiredness
- Breathing is difficult and fast (>25 inspirations / min)
- Complaining of chest tightness (please remember children have all sorts of different ways to describe this symptom)
- Wheezing (a high-pitched musical sound when breathing)

Severe

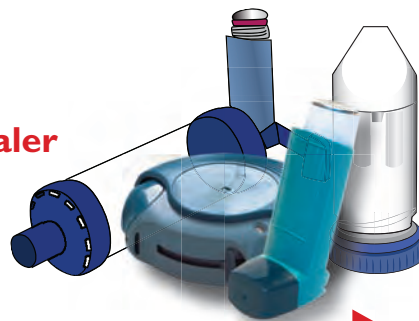
Any or all of the following may be observed

- Lips or nail beds are blue or gray
- Breathing is difficult and fast (>25 inspirations / min)
- Ribs show during breathing (the skin between the ribs and neck are sucked in with each breath)
- Can only say 3 - 5 words before needing to take another breath
- Unable to catch his/her breath
- Not improving after taking reliever inhaler within 5-10 minutes
- Any doubts about the child's condition

What to do

1 Administer the reliever inhaler immediately

(this inhaler opens the narrowed airway passages quickly) **Reliever inhaler should work within 5 - 10 minutes... If not...**



2 Stay Calm! Remain with and reassure the child

Asthma attacks are frightening... listen to what the child is saying.

3 Tell the child to breathe slowly and deeply

Usually it is easier to sit-up and lean slightly forward. Lying on their back is not recommended! Do not have the child breathe into a paper bag.

After the Attack

- Minor asthma attacks should not interrupt a child's involvement in school. As soon as they feel better, they can return to normal school activities.
- The parent must be notified about the attack.
- The medication must be recorded.
- **If the child requires the inhaler again in less than four hours the parents need to be notified and the child should be taken for medical attention.**



What to do

1 This is an emergency situation! Call 911



2 Give reliever inhaler again immediately



3 Continue to give the reliever inhaler every few minutes until help arrives.

A child should always be taken to the hospital in an ambulance. School staff should not take them in their car as the child's condition may deteriorate quickly.