

What to Do During an Asthma Attack

When a child experiences an asthma attack the following can occur:

- The muscles around the bronchiole tubes swell, constricting the tubes.
- The lining of the airway swells.
- The airways fill with mucus.

Triggers:

- A cold or respiratory infection
- Exercise
- Lung irritants like perfume, cigarette smoke, hair sprays, room fresheners
- Allergies to animals, pollen and foods
- Changes in weather or temperature
- Strong emotions.

Symptoms:

- Coughing
- Shortness of, or grasping for breath
- Wheezing
- Chest pain or rightness
- Speaking in short bursts of speech
- Flushed, pale, or bluish-looking skin

1. Have the student stop whatever activity they are doing. Send another student to get the school nurse.
Do not, under any circumstance, leave the student alone while they are having an **attack**
2. Follow the student's Asthma Action Plan or emergency plan, if there is one.
3. If the student has a **RESCUE ENHALER**, have them use it immediately and follow these steps:
 - Take 1 puff, hold breath for 10 seconds, and exhale.
 - Wait 1-2 minutes between puffs.
 - Take another puff, hold breath for 10 seconds, and exhale.
 - While sitting up, slowly breathe in through the nose and out through pursed lips.
 - Drink sips of room temperature water.
4. **Repeat** above steps if symptoms continue.
5. Only if, and when, symptoms are completely gone can the student resume regular activity.
6. **If symptoms reoccur** after the student resumes activity, repeat these steps and **do not** allow the student to resume activity for the remainder of the day.

CALL 9-1-1

IF:

- ✓ You are not sure what to do.
- ✓ Rescue medications are not working (symptoms are getting worse) or meds are unavailable.
- ✓ The student's lips or fingernails are blue.
- ✓ The student is having difficulty talking, walking, or drinking liquids.
- ✓ The student's nostrils are flaring out.
- ✓ You see neck, throat, or chest retractions.
- ✓ The student is in obvious distress, there is a change in level of consciousness, or the student is showing signs of confusion.
- ✓ The student's condition is deteriorating.