



## Back to School with Asthma

While scouring store shelves for school supplies and the latest fall fashions, students are filled with anticipation and anxiety as they prepare for a new school year. Students with asthma—and their parents—face an even bigger concern that must be addressed before the school year starts: their health in the classroom.

It is important to prepare and carefully monitor a detailed plan to manage asthma and ease the transition to a rigorous academic schedule.

### *Back-to-School with Asthma Checklist:*

- ✓ **Schedule Asthma Check-up:** During your child’s asthma check-up the doctor will have an opportunity to evaluate medications and physical activity considerations. The American Lung Association’s [Make Your Medical Visits More Satisfying](#) program can help prepare you for an appointment.
- ✓ **Develop or Update Asthma Action Plan:** Work with your child’s doctor to develop or update his/her written [Asthma Action Plan](#). A written Asthma Action Plan details information about your child's asthma symptoms, medications, and provides specific instructions during an asthma episode. Even if your child's asthma is well managed, Asthma Action Plans should be updated each school year.
- ✓ **Get a Flu Shot:** Influenza poses a special health risk to children with asthma, as these children often experience more severe symptoms. The American Lung Association strongly recommends that all children—especially those with asthma—be immunized against influenza. Protecting yourself against influenza by getting vaccinated further helps protect your child.
- ✓ **Visit Your Child's School Nurse and Teachers:** Provide an updated copy of your child’s Asthma Action Plan to all of your child's teachers, coaches, out-of-school activity organizers, as well as the school nurse and/or office. Discuss your child's specific triggers and typical symptoms so that they can be prepared to effectively assist your child should an asthma episode occur outside of your presence.
- ✓ **Advocate for Your Child:** In all 50 states, students have the legal right to carry asthma medications while at school. Check with your school nurse or administrator for your school's individual policy, and meet with your child's healthcare provider to complete the required paperwork. To learn more about creating an asthma-friendly school, see the [Asthma-Friendly Schools Initiative Toolkit](#).
- ✓ **Know About Prescription Assistance Services:** Don't let cost of medicines be the reason that your child doesn't get the necessary treatment to control their asthma. Talk to your local healthcare provider about low-cost or no-cost options that may be available to you. Three organizations are available to help:
  - The Partnership for Prescription Assistance can be reached by calling 1-888-4PPA-NOW.
  - Rx Outreach also provides information on their website: [www.rxoutreach.com](http://www.rxoutreach.com).
  - Patient Services Incorporated: <http://www.uneedpsi.org/cms400min/index.aspx>.
  - Most Pharmaceutical companies offer prescription assistance programs as well.

For additional information on asthma and children, visit [www.Lung.org](http://www.Lung.org) or call 1-800-LUNG-USA.

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