

Asthma Relief

For optimal asthma relief, it's important to take responsibility for self-care. With the help of your doctor, you can get the best asthma relief by checking your peak flow daily, developing an Asthma Action Plan with your doctor, keeping an asthma diary, avoiding asthma triggers, and using natural asthma therapies to help increase relaxation. Getting the best asthma relief means staying on top of your asthma triggers, signs and symptoms, and medications to prevent asthma problems.

Using a Peak Flow Meter for Asthma Care Using a peak flow meter may help you manage your asthma symptoms. With asthma, the inability to exhale air out of the lungs is responsible for a many of the symptoms of asthma. A peak flow meter is an inexpensive, portable, handheld device that is used to measure how well air moves out of your lungs. Measuring your peak flow using this meter is an important part of managing asthma and preventing you or your child from becoming seriously ill. A peak flow meter works by measuring how fast air comes out of the lungs when you exhale forcefully after inhaling fully. This measure is called a "peak expiratory flow," or "PEF." By keeping track of your PEF, you can know if your asthma is in control or worsening. If it is worsening, that's a sign to call your doctor immediately.

Developing an Asthma Action Plan Your doctor can assist you in developing an asthma action plan. This asthma action plan can help you to manage your asthma and prevent asthma attacks. The asthma action plan is designed to tell you what to do when you experience changes in the severity of your symptoms and in your peak flow numbers. For instance, your asthma action plan might list your asthma triggers and some ways to avoid them. Your asthma action plan may also list routine asthma symptoms and what you should do if these symptoms occur. The asthma action plan gives you and your family information that can be used in the event that you experience an asthma emergency. You can also develop a child's asthma action plan in order to have a simple way to understand and manage your child's asthma.

Keeping an Asthma Diary Keeping an asthma diary allows you to record your asthma symptoms, triggers, and treatment, so you can monitor your asthma. With the asthma diary, you can also record your peak expiratory flow (PEF) readings, compare your PEF readings with your asthma zones, and keep track of how often you use asthma medications for a sudden asthma attack. Keeping an asthma diary will help you recognize asthma attacks and head them off before you become seriously ill. Your doctor can use this diary to evaluate how well your asthma action plan is working.

Managing Your Child's Asthma at School It's important to communicate with your child's teachers and other caregivers for optimal asthma relief when your child is away from home. Managing your child's asthma at school is vital even if the child has only a mild case of asthma and even for children who do not need to take medicines when they are at school. With one out of every 10 children diagnosed with asthma today, most schools have many children with asthma, so many teachers -- and certainly the school nurses -- are very familiar with helping children with asthma. Still, it is important to learn the key steps necessary to ensure that your child gets adequate asthma support and that all the relevant people at school are familiar with what is needed to help your child. Also, if your child is bringing asthma medications to school, it's important that you instruct the teacher and any other adult who cares for your child how to properly administer these medications.

Controlling Asthma Triggers Controlling asthma triggers is possible if you know which triggers or allergens cause your symptoms. Your asthma triggers may be dust mites, molds, pollens, pets, cockroaches, and household irritants. Secondhand tobacco smoke may also be a trigger in your home or workplace. Other asthma triggers include ozone, environmental toxins, strong odors, weather fronts, cold air, and humidity. Once you know your asthma triggers, make plans to avoid these triggers at home, at work, and during recreational activities.

Do You Need an Air Filter? If you suffer with asthma at home, an air filter may help reduce allergy triggers. Learn what these air filters do to help reduce allergy and asthma triggers.

Natural Asthma Remedies Natural asthma remedies may include treatment such as herbs, dietary supplements, acupuncture, chiropractic, massage therapy, biofeedback, homeopathy, nutrition, and botanicals. The problem is there are few research studies on natural therapies. Natural therapies such as yoga breathing exercises may help people with asthma learn how to control their breathing and relieve stress, a common asthma trigger. Massage therapy may increase relaxation, helping the person with asthma breathe easier. Dietary changes are another natural remedy as you avoid foods that may trigger asthma symptoms. It's important for your doctor to be aware of any herbs or supplements you're taking as they may interfere with your asthma medications.

A Natural Cure for Asthma? After suffering with asthma for months or years, you may wonder if there's a natural cure for asthma. If so, millions with asthma would benefit! But the reality is there is no natural cure for asthma. In fact, it's highly advisable to avoid any remedy, natural or otherwise, that claims to be a "cure" for asthma. Some natural relaxation remedies like deep abdominal breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, and biofeedback can help relieve stress. Emotional stress is a trigger of asthma symptoms, so learning to relax is important in managing your asthma and reducing breathing problems. Numerous safe and effective asthma medications, particularly asthma inhalers, can decrease inflammation and treat and prevent asthma symptoms. While these medications do not cure asthma, they can help you to breathe normally most of the time. Because asthma is a serious illness, it's best to trust your doctor to guide you in treating your asthma symptoms.