

THE LUNG ASSOCIATION™

Almost 3 million Canadians and more than 300 million people worldwide have asthma, including many top athletes. Asthma is a common chronic lung disease that can make it difficult to breathe. Although there is no cure for asthma, those with the condition can live healthy, active lives if their asthma is under control.

Here are some helpful tips for people with asthma.

1. Know your triggers and avoid them

Triggers like allergens and irritants can make your asthma symptoms worse by irritating your airways. The best way to control your asthma is to know what your [asthma triggers](#) are and how to avoid them.

2. Take your asthma medication as prescribed by your doctor

Most people with asthma need to take an everyday controller medication to manage their asthma. Asthma is a chronic (long-term) lung disease so it is important to take these medications everyday even when you feel well in order to prevent asthma symptoms. Find out if your asthma is under control by taking the **30 Second Asthma Test** and [read more about asthma medications and how to use them](#).

30 Second Asthma Test

1. Do you use your rescue inhaler 4 or more times per week?
2. Do you cough, wheeze, or have a tight chest because of asthma – 4 or more days per week?
3. Do you wake up at night from cough, wheeze, or chest tightness – more than 1 time per week?
4. Do you have to stop exercising because of your asthma – in the past 3 months?
5. Do you miss work or school because of your asthma – in the past month?

** If you answered YES to 1 of these questions, your asthma could be dangerously out of control. Please see your doctor or certified respiratory educator.*

3. Learn how to use your inhaler properly

Taking your medication properly is key in managing asthma symptoms. With proper inhaler technique, medications can reach your airways and work to help you breathe easier. Practice taking your inhaler with a health care provider. They may offer suggestions on how to improve your technique. [Check out our videos on how to properly use your inhalers](#).

4. Quit smoking and avoid second-hand smoke

If you smoke and have asthma, [quitting smoking](#) can significantly reduce the severity and frequency of your symptoms. Smoking also reduces the effectiveness of asthma medication. If you have asthma but don't smoke, avoiding exposure to second-hand smoke is important because this may be a trigger and make your symptoms worse. Order your FREE quit smoking guide today <https://sk.lung.ca/services/printed-materials>.

5. Keep fit by exercising

Exercise helps by strengthening your breathing muscles, boosting your immune system and helping to keep a healthy body weight. The key to exercising safely is to make sure your asthma is under control before you start. [Learn more about exercise and asthma](#).

6. Be in control, get an asthma action plan

Because asthma symptoms are variable – they can get worse or better, depending on many things – it is important to know how to adjust your medications depending on your symptoms and when to seek medical help. Work with your healthcare provider to create a personalized [asthma action plan](#) for you.

7. Don't go viral!

Viruses like the cold and flu can infect people's airways and lungs. Viral infections are a common cause of asthma symptoms. If you avoid catching viruses, you will likely have fewer asthma symptoms. Here are some ways to avoid viruses:

- [Wash your hands properly and often.](#)
- Get the flu shot.
- Ask your health-care provider if you should get the pneumonia shot.
- Get enough sleep. If you are well rested, you may be less likely to have symptoms from a virus.
- If you have a viral infection like a cold or the flu, pay attention to your symptoms. If your symptoms are getting worse, follow the directions in your asthma action plan.

If you or someone you love has asthma, you may have questions.

For information on lung health, and to speak to a certified respiratory educator, call us toll-free @ 1-888-566-LUNG.