

# A B C Children's Health

## Tips On Coping With Allergies And Asthma

(NAPSA)—For millions of children with asthma and allergies, uncomfortable symptoms like wheezing and sneezing can interfere with their lives at school and play.

Fortunately, by following a few simple steps, parents can help control the frequency and severity of their child's asthma and allergy episodes.

Asthma is one of the most common chronic pediatric conditions in the nation and often is associated with allergies, the sixth most common chronic condition in the United States.

As cases of pediatric asthma continue to rise, it is important that parents, school nurses and doctors team up to make sure kids with asthma stay healthy. Currently, asthma is the leading cause of missed school days, accounting for 10 million absences per year. With all the knowledge and treatment options available today, there are ways to help children avoiding missing valuable class time:

**1. Have a plan.** With your child's physician, complete a written action plan for school professionals that provides detailed information about your child's asthma and allergies management program and emergency contact information. An example of an asthma action plan can be viewed at [www.SchoolAsthmaAllergy.com](http://www.SchoolAsthmaAllergy.com).

**2. Know your triggers.** It is important to be aware of the things in your child's environment that tend to make his or her asthma and allergies worse, and to minimize exposure to those triggers. A complete list of asthma triggers can be viewed at [www.FreeBreather.com](http://www.FreeBreather.com).

**3. Take care of allergies.** Asthma is often associated with allergies. Some allergens, including pollen, mold, animal dander, dust mites, and irritants like cigarette smoke, can trigger an asthma attack. To control asthma, talk with your child's physician about appropriate treatment and avoiding exposure to allergens.



**There are ways parents can help children with asthma and allergies avoid missing valuable school time.**

For possible treatment options talk to your doctor and visit [www.MyHealth.com](http://www.MyHealth.com).

**4. Go with the peak flow.** The peak flow meter can be the single most important tool in managing asthma. It measures how well air moves out of the lungs and can detect subtle lung changes hours or even days before a patient feels symptoms. For specific information on how to measure with peak flows, log on to [www.SchoolAsthmaAllergy.com](http://www.SchoolAsthmaAllergy.com).

**5. Take medications as directed.** Because each case of asthma and allergies is different, treatments are tailored for each child. Asthma medications are divided into two types—quick-relief and long-term control. Talk to your child's doctor about which type to use when.

Many kids with asthma and allergies feel self-conscious or different from other children. Assure your child that these conditions are nothing to be embarrassed about and encourage your child to talk about his or her health with you.

Important asthma and allergy information and interactive health management tools are just a click away on the World Wide Web. Children with asthma and allergies should see their doctor regularly, not only to monitor these conditions, but also maintain their overall health.