

When and Where to Get Help for Asthma

- Uncontrolled asthma can lead to emergency visits and hospitalization. See your doctor or pediatrician for more information about how to get control of asthma, so it doesn't control you.
- Remember – In Alberta, Health Link is a 24 hour telephone advice line staffed by experienced nurses. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call 403-943-LINK (5465) in Calgary or if you are outside of Calgary, call 1-866-408-LINK (5465) toll-free in Alberta.

	SEE YOUR DOCTOR	GO TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT	CALL 911
WHAT YOU SEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your child is using their rescue/reliever medication (often blue) more than 2 times/week (not counting once/day before exercise) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the skin at the base of your child's neck, between the ribs or below the breastbone pulls in when your child breathes • If your child has no energy to play or even move around • Infants may refuse to eat or drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you observe severe symptoms – breathing very fast, gasping for breath, having difficulty speaking, blue-grey lips or fingernails, CALL 911
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your asthma symptoms are worsening, take your preventer/controller medication at the highest dose recommended by your doctor • Make an appointment to see your doctor as soon as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give rescue/reliever medication (often blue). This medication should make breathing easier within 5-10 minutes. Rescue/reliever medication should provide good relief for 3 to 4 hours. • If you need to repeat the doses before 3 hours or if you don't see improvement within 12 – 24 hours, please seek medical attention. • You know your child best. If you are worried, go to the Emergency Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain calm. • CALL 911 and administer the rescue/reliever medication (often blue)
WHAT HAPPENS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone with asthma should have an asthma action plan. Your plan will help you know what medications to take, depending on whether your asthma is in control, changing or getting worse. • Make an appointment with your doctor to develop your asthma action plan • Print a blank copy of the asthma action plan from our web site at www.calgaryhelathregion.ca/ican (See Adults/Tools) to take to your doctor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients typically stay several hours for treatment/observation or may be admitted to the hospital until their asthma symptoms are under better control. In addition to their regular inhaled medication, patients may be prescribed a short 5 day course of oral steroids to help get asthma back under control quickly • Ask for an Emergency Asthma Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency medical personnel will arrive and treat the patient at the scene, then transport to the Emergency Department for further assessment and treatment • Patients with asthma typically stay several hours for treatment and observation or may be admitted to the hospital until their asthma is in better control.

Reminders:

1. If possible, remove child from any known triggers;
2. Have child sit up and loosen restrictive clothing;
3. Make an appointment with your family doctor/pediatrician as soon as possible following your emergency visit;
4. Visit the Control Asthma Now website at www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/ican for more asthma-related information.

This material is designed for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instruction and/or treatment. If you have specific questions, please consult your doctor or appropriate healthcare professional.