

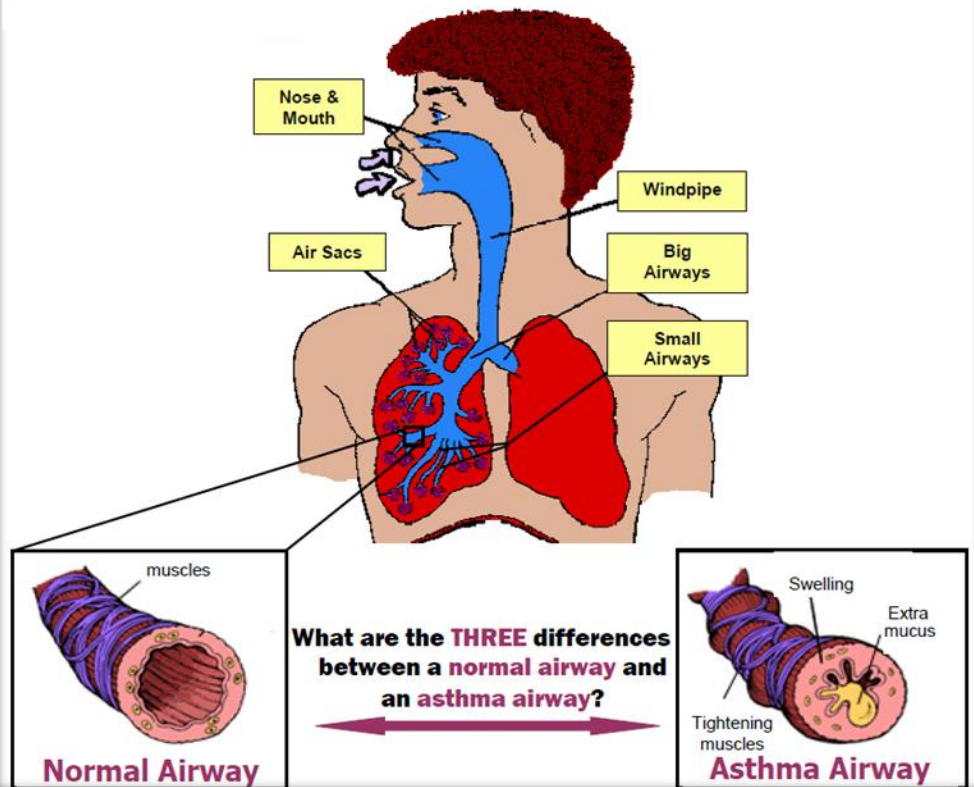
# LIVING WITH ASTHMA

## **Don't let your asthma limit your activities - Control Your Asthma!**

- Follow your Asthma Action Plan and know where and when to get help.
- Take your medications as prescribed and do not stop them without talking to your provider.
- Keep track of how many puffs are left so you know when you need a refill.
- If your asthma is well controlled, one canister of albuterol should last you at least 4 months.
- If you need albuterol more than 2 days per week or 2 nights per month, your asthma is not controlled! Consult your action plan or contact your provider.
- Avoid your triggers!  
-dust, pollen, pets, smoke, illness, stress, colds.
- Contact your provider every 6 months to update your asthma plan

## **Why Does Asthma Make It Hard To Breathe?**

**Asthma** is a disease of your breathing tubes. We call these tubes your *airways*. **When people have asthma attacks their airways narrow, or get smaller, making it hard to breathe.**



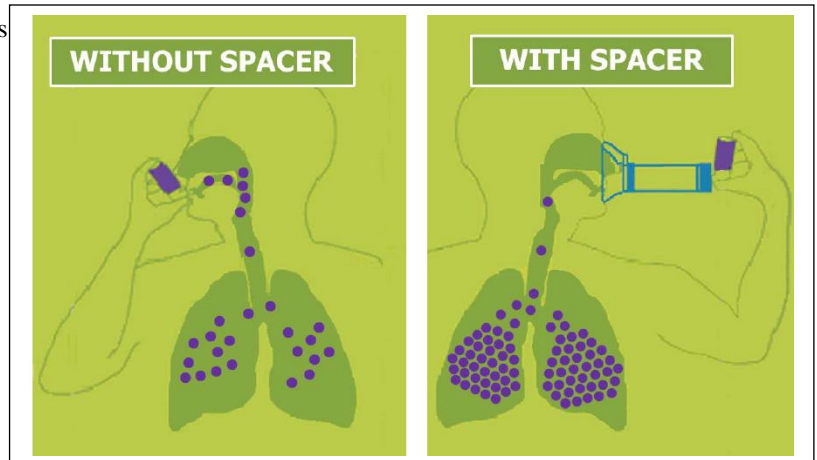
## **HOW TO USE YOUR MEDICINES:**

### **Inhaler and Spacer Tips:**

- Inhalers with spacers work as well or better than nebulizers
- Shake canister vigorously
- Prime your inhaler
- Always use a spacer
  - --If you have a mouthpiece: Take a slow breath in and hold for 10 seconds
  - --If you have a mask: Make a good seal around the mouth and nose and breathe in and out 10 times
- Wait 1 minute between puffs
- Wait 5 minutes between using your albuterol and controller medication.
- Rinse mouth after use

### **Nebulizer Tips**

- Most of the medication is lost if you try to give "blow by" treatments
- If using a mask, make sure it is touching the skin around the mouth and nose
- If using a mouthpiece, make sure the lips are sealed around it



# LIVING WITH ASTHMA

## Common Asthma Triggers

• **Infections**—most commonly colds/flu from viruses, but also bacteria (sinus infections and/or pneumonia)

• **Allergies**—to dust, pollens (from grass, trees, and weeds), molds, animals, cockroaches for instance. Less commonly, food allergies may trigger asthma.

• **Exercise or active play** (especially sustained running more than 5 minutes)

• **Night time**—most asthma is worse at 4 a.m. and best at 4 p.m.

• **Smoke**—tobacco smoke (cigarettes, cigars), fireplace, wood burning stove, incense, and/or barbecue

• **Irritating Fumes/Chemicals**—paints, perfumes, detergents, smog or anything with a strong odor may trigger asthma

• **Weather**—Cold air and weather changes (changes in temperature and/or humidity)

• **Stress/Emotions**—emotions don't cause asthma, but in susceptible people, they may trigger it

• **Acid Reflux (Heartburn)**—Acid reflux from the stomach upward into the esophagus may trigger asthma symptoms

## What Are The Two Types of Asthma Medicines?

### QUICK RELIEVER (Albuterol)

Examples:



#### RELIEVER MEDICINE HELPS WHEN YOU'RE HAVING AN ASTHMA ATTACK.

- Everyone should have quick reliever medicine to take when they have symptoms.
- Be sure to have one at all times – even at school.

#### HOW DOES MY QUICK RELIEVER WORK?

This medicine relieves the **Tightening of muscles** around your airways.

Swelling  
Extra Mucus  
Tightening muscles



### CONTROLLER

Examples:



#### CONTROLLER MEDICINE HELPS PREVENT ASTHMA ATTACKS.

- Some people take controllers every day to help make their airways less sensitive.
- If you use this medicine, over time you will have fewer symptoms.

#### HOW DOES MY CONTROLLER WORK?

This medicine prevents & controls the **Swelling** and **Extra mucus** production in your airways.

Swelling  
Extra Mucus  
Tightening muscles

#### WHEN DO I USE MY QUICK RELIEVER?

- Take this medicine **when you have symptoms**.
- It should provide relief in 5-10 minutes.
- You should also use it 15 minutes before you exercise.

#### WHEN DO I USE MY CONTROLLER?

- Take this medicine **every day** even when you are feeling fine.
- This medicine works slowly over time.
- If you stop taking it, you may feel more asthma symptoms.

## PRIMING and CLEANING YOUR INHALER

Medication	Priming	Repriming	When to Reprime	# of puffs	Cleaning
ProAir (Albuterol)	3 puffs	3 puffs	2 weeks	200	Rinse plastic actuator with water weekly
Flovent (Fluticasone)	4 puffs	1 puff	7 days/dropped	120	Qtip, No water
Qvar (Beclomethasone)	2 puffs	2 puffs	10 days	120	Wipe with tissue, No water
Dulera (Mometasone/Formeterol)	4 puffs	4 puffs	5 days	120	Wipe with dry cloth, No water

- Always prime your inhaler before your 1<sup>st</sup> use by puffing the inhaler into the air. See above chart for number of puffs.
- Re-prime your inhaler if it has not been used for the number of days listed above.
- For Flovent, Qvar or Dulera, do not use water to clean the canister. Remove the medication from the plastic actuator weekly and use a Qtip or cloth to de-clog the opening.
- For Proair-Rinse the plastic actuator only. Use warm water for 30 sec from one end and another 30 sec from the other end.