



Symptom Management after an Asthma Attack

Step 1

Give your child their usual preventer inhaler as prescribed.

Once trained encourage your child to do regular peak flow readings (morning and night)

Step 2

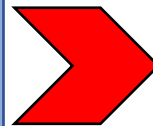
Look out for symptoms that show your child needs their blue inhaler. This could be cough, wheeze, shortness of breath, chest tightness or their peak flow is dropping

Step 3

If your child has asthma symptoms, give 2 puffs of the blue inhaler via your spacer, one puff at a time. After 5-10 minutes, if your child still has symptoms repeat this until you have given up to 6 puffs

Step 4

Your child should feel much better, and this should last at least 4 hours. Your child should be needing their blue inhaler less and less. If not, move into the red box



Step 5

Your child should now be back into the green zone of their asthma management plan.

Your child should have:

- a post-attack review with either their GP or asthma nurse within 48 hours.
- a full asthma review arranged either with their GP or asthma team within the next 4 weeks

What if my child is not getting better?

If your child:

- still has symptoms after 6 puffs of the blue inhaler OR
- needs the blue inhaler more than every four hours

they are not getting better, and you need to take action now:

1. Give up to 10 puffs of the blue inhaler via spacer, 1 puff at a time.

AND

2. Arrange an urgent review with their doctor today, or go to the emergency department if this is not possible.

If your child is continuing to need 10 puffs of the blue inhaler every 4 hours, you should get a more urgent review (within the next few hours)

If your child is having difficulty breathing not relieved by 10 puffs of salbutamol or needs 10 puffs more often than every 4 hours,

You should call 999

and

whilst waiting for the ambulance, use the spacer to give 1 puff of their blue inhaler every 30 seconds, taking 5 breaths for every puff given

How to use a peak flow meter

Peak flow readings are usually reliable from the age of 8 years

- Stand up or sit up straight
- Check that the red arrow on the peak flow meter is on zero
- Take a deep breath in filling the lungs with air
- Place the mouthpiece between your teeth and lips and blow hard and fast into the device (a single blow) – like blowing out candles on a birthday cake
- Note the number next to the arrow – this is your peak flow
- Push the arrow back to zero and take a few normal breaths
- Repeat twice more
- Record your highest blow
- The 3 blows should be about the same



Scan here to see a video on how to take a peak flow reading



What peak flow reading should my child get?

If your child has done peak flows before, you should use their best ever peak flow reading as the number to aim for.

If this is the first time your child has done a peak flow, use the table below as a guide, but make a note of their best peak flow number as soon as they are well and use this in the future.

Average Expected Peak Flow Readings:

Patient Height (cm)	Expected PEFR (litres/min)
110	150
120	200
130	250
140	300
150	350
160	400
170	450