

# Asthma Action Plan

(See reverse for instructions on how to use a peak flow meter.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 MHN \_\_\_\_\_ Date (m/d/y) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Asthma care provider \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone no. \_\_\_\_\_

**GO!**

**GREEN ZONE**

**Looks good. Continue prescribed medications.**

**Symptoms**

- No cough, wheeze, chest tightness or shortness of breath during the day or night
- Can do normal activities

**CAUTION!**

**YELLOW ZONE**

**You are not breathing your best.**

**Symptoms**

- Coughing, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, chest tightness and/or wheezing (a whistling sound that can be heard while breathing)
- Need to stop during play or activity to catch your breath
- Difficulty sleeping or eating normally because of asthma symptoms
- Increased need for rescue medicine

**STOP!**

**RED ZONE**

**Take your medication immediately.**

**Symptoms**

- Rapid breathing, very short of breath, use of neck and stomach muscles to breath
- Cannot stop coughing (wheezing may or may not be present)
- Awakening almost every night because of asthma symptoms
- Cannot do usual activities. Children will be less active
- Rescue medicine has not helped

**If you have trouble walking and/or talking due to shortness of breath and/or lips or fingernails are blue, go to the hospital or call 911.**

Peak Flow Zones (Average Peak Flow)	Controller Medicine	Quick Reliever (Rescue Medicine)	Prednisone (Oral Steroid)	Additional Medications/Comments
100%		<input type="checkbox"/> Use quick relief inhaler 15 – 30 minutes before exercise.		
80%	<input type="checkbox"/> Double the dose of your controller medicine for 7 – 10 days	May use every 20 minutes up to 1 hour. Reevaluate symptoms/peak flow. If asthma symptoms have improved to green zone, then use quick relief medicine every _____ days hours for _____ days and increase controller medications as directed.		If colds typically cause your asthma to worsen, make yellow zone inhaler adjustments at the first sign of a cold and continue for 7 – 10 days
50%		May use every 20 minutes up to 1 hour. Reevaluate symptoms/peak flow. If asthma symptoms have improved to yellow zone, then use medications listed in the yellow zone. If you remain in the red zone, start oral steroid and call provider.	<input type="checkbox"/> Call your provider if you need to start the oral prednisone	<b>Common asthma triggers</b> Smoke Exercise Viruses (cold or flu) Cold air Allergies (pollen, mold, animals, dust)

- Remember to bring your peak flow meter, asthma diary and action plan to physician visits.
- People who should have a copy of my Asthma Action Plan: spouse, school, coworkers, babysitter, and family members/friends.
- Call your physician if you have any questions.

## ***Peak Flow Meter***

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A peak flow meter is a device that measures how well air moves out of your lungs. During an asthma episode the airways of the lungs begin to narrow slowly. The peak flow meter can be used to find out if there is narrowing in the airways – before you have any symptoms of asthma. By taking your medicine early (before symptoms) you may be able to stop the episode quickly and avoid a serious episode of asthma. Peak flow meters are used to check your asthma the way that blood pressure cuffs are used to check high blood pressure.

### **The peak flow meter can also be used to help you and your doctor:**

- decide if your medicine plan is working well
- decide when to add or stop medicine
- decide when to seek emergency care
- identify triggers – that is, what causes your asthma symptoms to increase
- talk about your asthma with more knowledge

### **HOW TO USE A PEAK FLOW METER**

1. Place the indicator at the base of the numbered scale.
2. Stand up.
3. Take a deep breath.
4. Place the meter in your mouth and close your lips around the mouthpiece.  
Do not put your tongue inside the hole.
5. Blow out as hard and fast as you can.
6. Write down the number you get.
7. Repeat steps 1 through 6 two more times.
8. Record the highest of the three numbers achieved in you diary or on your calendar.

### **FIND YOUR PERSONAL BEST PEAK FLOW NUMBER**

Your personal best peak flow number is the highest peak flow number you can achieve over a 2 – 3-week period when your asthma is under good control. Good control is when you feel good and do not have any asthma symptoms.

Each patient's asthma is different, and your best peak flow number may be higher or lower than the average usual number for someone of your height, weight and sex. This means that it is important for you to find your own personal best peak flow number. Your own medicine plan needs to be based on your own personal best peak flow number.

### **CHECKING YOUR ASTHMA: WHEN TO USE YOUR PEAK FLOW METER**

- Every morning when you wake up, before you take your medicine. Make this part of your daily routine.
- When you are having asthma symptoms or an attack. And after taking medicine for the attack. This can tell you how bad your asthma attack is and whether your medicine is working.
- Any other time your doctor suggests.

If you use more than one peak flow meter (such as at home and at school), be sure that both meters are the same brand.