

Asthma Triggers

Children with asthma have extra sensitive airways and many things around them can make their asthma worse. The things around your child that cause an asthma attack are called triggers. Triggers are different for each child. Your healthcare provider can help you figure out your child's triggers. Try to keep your child away from their triggers, especially at home and at school where your child spends most of their time.

If your child has asthma symptoms such as cough, trouble breathing or wheezing, follow his or her Asthma Action Plan instructions.

IRRITANTS



SMOKE: Being around smoke can be very harmful to a child with asthma and increases the chance of having an asthma attack.

Tobacco or Marijuana Smoke

- DO NOT let anyone smoke inside your house or in your car.
- If you can, quit smoking. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for help from the Colorado QuitLine.
- You should only smoke outside. Wear a “smoking jacket” and leave the “smoking jacket” outside. Wash your hands after smoking.
- Keep your child away from places where people smoke.
- Avoid electronic cigarettes and vaping too.



Wood Smoke

- Don't use a wood burning stove for heat or a wood fireplace and avoid campfires.



STRONG SMELLS:

- Don't use air fresheners, perfume, cologne, room spray, or hair spray. The strong smells can trigger an asthma attack.
- Use unscented household cleaning products.



POLLUTION

- When the pollution is high, have your child stay indoors.



ILLNESS:

- Your child should avoid people who are sick.
- Make sure your child gets a flu shot every year.
- Follow your child's Asthma Action Plan.



COLD AIR:

- Have your child wear a clean scarf or pulled up turtle neck around their face.
- Tell your child to breathe through their nose when they are outside in the cold air.

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The information presented is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of your personal doctor's advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information should not be used in place of a visit, call or consultation or advice of your doctor or other health care provider.

ALLERGENS

POLLEN & OUTDOOR MOLD:



- Keep house and car windows closed during allergy season.
- Use central air conditioning or fans when you can.
- Mow your lawn often and keep the grass short to cut down on pollen. The allergic patient should not mow the lawn.
- Have your child take a shower and change their clothes right after being outside during high-pollen seasons.
- You can check pollen counts [online](#) or in local weather reports. Stay indoors when pollen and mold counts are high.
- Don't hang your clothes outside to dry.
- Talk to your medical provider about allergy medicines and saline nasal rinses.

INDOOR MOLD:



- Keep your bathrooms and kitchen clean and well ventilated.
- Use a bleach solution (1 part bleach and 10 part water) to clean mold.
- Keep indoor humidity at less than 40%.
- Fix all water leaks and remove any standing water.
- Have your heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems cleaned and repaired often.

HOUSE DUST:

- Wash stuffed toys and bedding in hot water (130°F) every week.
- Don't keep a lot of stuffed animals on the bed. Cut down on clutter.
- Bare floors are best. If you have carpet, vacuum it often.
- Take down drapes and blinds when possible.
- Put mattresses, pillows and box springs in allergen proof coverings.
- If you have a forced-air furnace, change the dust filters regularly during the heating season.

ANIMALS: All furred and feathered animals can cause allergic reactions. There are no hypo-allergenic dogs.



- Keep your pets out of your child's bedroom at all times. It's best to keep your pets outside.
- Have your child wash their hands and change their clothes after playing with pets.
- Pets can bring outdoor pollens inside. Brush your pets outside every day and give them a bath every week.
- Use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters and vacuums.
- If your child's asthma or allergy symptoms still don't get better, you may need to think about having your pet live somewhere else.

COCKROACHES:



- Don't leave food and garbage out.
- Put out bait traps or call a professional exterminator to get rid of cockroaches.

OTHER TRIGGERS

EXERCISE INDUCED ASTHMA



- Give your child their quick relief medication (albuterol or levalbuterol) 15 minutes before they exercise.

STRONG EMOTIONS: Laughing or crying can trigger an asthma attack.



- Teach your child relaxation or calming methods like deep breathing (take a breath slowly through your nose and then blow out slowly through your mouth).