

FALL FOCUS ON ASTHMA

Back-to-school time is also the start of cold and flu season. Colds, flu, and other viruses are key asthma triggers and spread easily in school settings.

Plan ahead to keep your child's asthma symptoms well managed during the fall months. Make sure teachers, school nurses, coaches, and others know that your child has asthma and what to do to help manage it.

Before school starts:

- Watch for warning signs that asthma symptoms are NOT well managed, including coughing at night or not being able to keep up with other children's play or exercise
- Have an asthma-only visit with your child's healthcare provider. Talk about any warning signs or asthma symptoms you see
- Make sure all asthma medicines are being taken as prescribed
- Work with your child's provider to make a written asthma action plan. Talk with your child about it. This will help you and your child know how to prevent asthma symptoms and what to do if they occur. An action plan should include:
 - What medicines to take
 - When to take them
 - How much to take
 - When to get help

At school:

- Teach your child what to do if he or she has asthma symptoms at school
- Give your child's teachers, school nurse, coach, gym teacher, and bus driver a copy of your child's asthma action plan and discuss it with them
- Ask your child's school to:
 - Develop a written policy that allows children to take asthma medicines at school as prescribed by their provider and permitted by the parent
 - Be smoke-free
 - Develop an asthma education program for all school staff and students
 - Monitor indoor air quality

Flu shot

Talk with your provider about when your child and family members should get flu shots. The flu can be more serious in patients with asthma.

Work with the school staff to help your child manage their asthma.