

Self-care Skills for Your Child With Asthma

“Educate yourself, educate your child; but allow the kid to be a kid.”

—Greer, on what parents can do to help

Your support is key to helping your child learn the self-care skills needed to take care of asthma for life. You may think about your child’s asthma often and worry about how it may affect his or her daily life. As your child grows, changes in mind and body during the teen years can make sticking with an asthma treatment plan hard. Learn more about what you can do to help.

Know how asthma can affect children and teens

Children and teens with asthma may have low self-esteem, missed school or work, sleepiness that can affect schoolwork or work, and depression.

Young people with asthma may worry about:

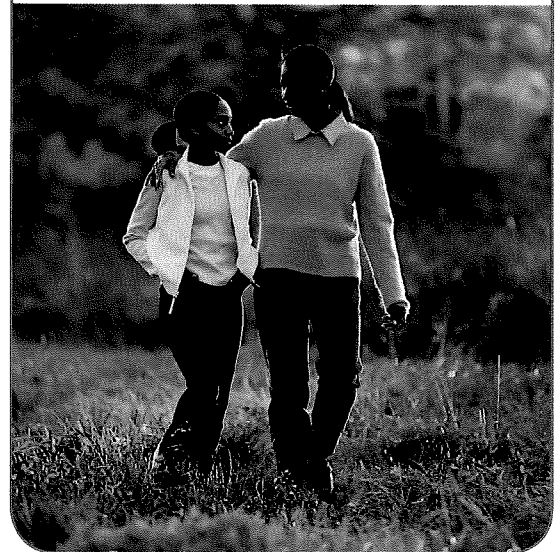
- “Fitting in”
- Being understood by teachers, coaches, and others about how asthma may affect them
- Not knowing when asthma symptoms may occur
- Taking care of themselves when parents aren’t around. Problems may include visiting friends with pets, forgetting to carry a rescue inhaler, running out of medicine, and ignoring symptoms until they get serious

Learn about asthma to help answer your child’s questions

- Find out all you can about asthma. Get to know your child’s concerns and feelings about asthma
- Talk with your child’s healthcare provider or other parents of children with asthma to learn ways to talk with your child about his or her asthma and feelings
 - Ask your child’s provider if there are parent support groups in your area

Listen to your teen to learn how asthma affects him or her

- Be available—be the one to start the conversation
- Focus on your teen’s feelings, not yours
- Talk with your teen—don’t lecture



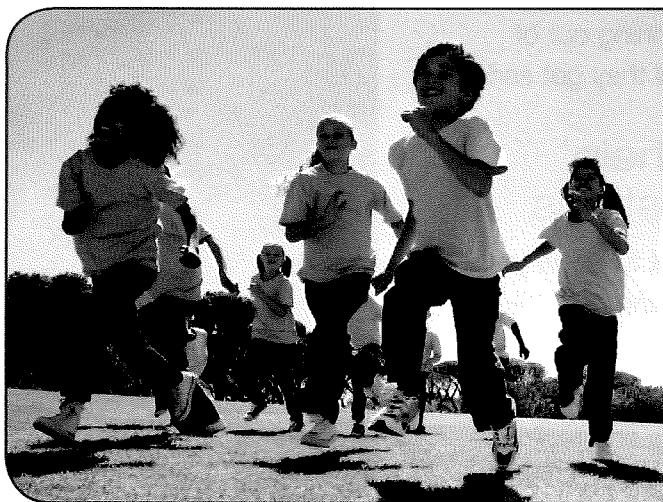
Supporting your child in learning self-care skills can help build his or her confidence.

Help your child or teen learn self-care skills

- Make sure your child is using the right medicines at the right time
 - Know which are daily preventive asthma medicines and which are rescue medicines to use for sudden symptoms
 - Teach your child or teen about his or her medicines and review them over time
- Know how your child's asthma medicine is given
 - Young children may need a nebulizer
 - Older children and teens may use a handheld inhaler
- Children ages 10 or older—and younger children who are able—should help develop their own asthma action plan with their healthcare provider
 - Review the green, yellow, and red zone instructions with your child so he or she is confident about what to do for each zone
 - Keep your child's asthma action plan up-to-date
- Make sure that sitters, teachers, school nurses, camp counselors, coaches, and other caregivers know your child has asthma; understand how asthma may affect daily activities; and know when and how medicines should be given
 - Give them a copy of your child's asthma action plan

Help your teen over the rough spots

- “Check in” often to make sure your teen is taking asthma medicines as directed
- Watch for asthma symptoms and schedule a visit with your teen's provider if needed
- Encourage your teen to talk with a provider and/or other teens with asthma to share questions, problems, and successes



Get involved
and stay
involved!
Help your
child or teen
gain more
self-care skills
for asthma.



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