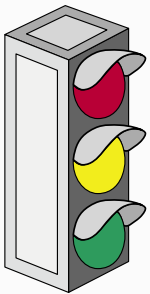


YOUR ASTHMA POCKET GUIDE



Passport Health Plan
305 W. Broadway, 3rd Floor
Louisville, KY 40202



WHAT'S INSIDE ...

- Facts about Asthma
- Controlling Asthma
- Asthma Triggers
- Warning Signs
- Medicines

ASTHMA FACTS

- Asthma is a lung disease you live with everyday.
- Asthma is a chronic disease. This means it will not go away.
- You can get asthma at any age.
- Not everyone's asthma is the same.
 - Asthma can be controlled. You can live a healthy life.
 - Asthma can scar the airways if it is not controlled.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE LUNGS

- The muscles around the airways are “twitchy” (move fast all of the sudden).
- The airways become red, swollen and filled with mucus.
- The muscles around the airway get tight.
 - Asthma blocks airflow in the small airways.
 - Blockage in the airways can be reversed. This means the airways can be opened up so you can breathe.

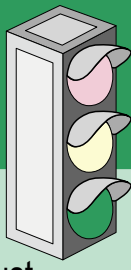
ASTHMA TRIGGERS

- Things that cause the airways to swell and muscles to get tight. This is called an asthma attack.

Asthma triggers can be things like:

- **Allergens (things you are allergic to)**
 - Pollen
 - Mold
 - Dust mites
 - Cockroaches
 - Animal dander (fur, skin, saliva)
- **Irritants (things that bother you)**
 - Tobacco smoke
 - Strong odors or sprays (perfumes, air freshener, hair spray, cleaner)
 - Smoke that comes from wood
- **Other Triggers**
 - Infections (sinus)
 - Emotions (laughing really hard, crying)
 - Exercise (walking, playing sports, running)

GREEN ZONE – ASTHMA CONTROL



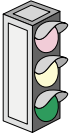
This means you are feeling good and your asthma is not keeping you from doing things you want to do. Some people with asthma must take controller medicines to stay in the Green Zone. If you are taking controller medicines you must take them everyday.

ASTHMA CONTROL

- You have no symptoms (coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath or chest tightness).
- You can sleep through the night without asthma symptoms.
- You are not missing school or work due to asthma.
- You can do normal activities – walk, run or play sports without getting asthma symptoms.
- You do not go to the hospital or emergency room for asthma.

Talk to your primary care practitioner (PCP) about your asthma control if:

- You have asthma symptoms 2 times a week.
- You have asthma symptoms at night 2 times a month.
- You refill your reliever medicine more than 2 times a year.



Some medicines you may take when you are in the Green Zone - Asthma Control:

• Controller Medicines

- Keep you from having asthma attacks.
- Keep your airways from swelling.
- Must be taken every day.
- Do not work quickly.

• Examples of Controller Medicines

• Inhaled Steroids

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| • Q-Var | • Advair* |
| • Pulmicort | • Pulmicort Respules* |
| • Flovent | • Aerobid |
| • Azmacort | |

Note: Rinse your mouth after using the above medicines

• Leukotriene Modifiers

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • Singulair* | • Accolate* |
|--------------|-------------|

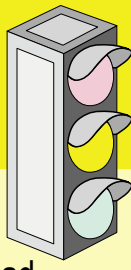
• Mast Cell Stabilizers

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| • Intal | • Tilade |
|---------|----------|

• Long-Acting Bronchodilators

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| • Serevent | • Foradil |
| • Slo-bid | • Theophylline |
| • Uniphyll | • Theodur |

YELLOW ZONE – CAUTION



This means you are starting to get asthma symptoms. You should take your reliever medicine to keep an asthma attack from getting bad.

ASTHMA WARNING SIGNS

What you may see:

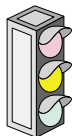
- Unusual tiredness
- Slouched posture
- Restlessness in bed
- Faster breathing
- Scared or worried look
- Sunken spaces between ribs
- Pale or sweaty skin
- Change in face color or dark circles under the eyes
- Glassy eyes

What you may hear:

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Wheezing or noisy breathing
- Frequent throat clearing

Before an asthma attack you might:

- Have a drop in peak flow reading.
- Get cranky.
- Have a hard time sitting still.
- Feel tightness in the chest.
- Feel out of breath.
- Have a dry mouth, itchy skin, itchy/watery eyes or runny nose.



Some medicines you may take when you are in the Yellow Zone - Asthma Caution:

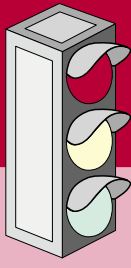
• Reliever Medicines

- Help stop asthma attacks that have already started.
- Work fast to loosen up tight muscles and open the airway.
- Can keep an asthma attack from getting serious.
- Should be taken at the first sign of asthma symptoms - cough, wheeze, shortness of breath, or chest tightness OR when peak flow readings drop into the yellow zone.

• Examples of Reliever Medicines

- Bronchodilators
 - Albuterol inhaler
 - Ventolin
 - Maxair
 - Combivent*
 - Albuterol nebulizer
 - Proventil
 - Xopenex nebulizer*

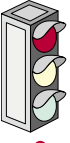
RED ZONE – STOP – DANGER



This means you are having an asthma attack. You must call your PCP or get emergency care right away.

ASTHMA EMERGENCY

- Do not stop taking your reliever medicine even if you do not think it is working.
- Symptoms that do not go away after using reliever medicine.
- Cannot walk or talk well.
- Peak flow numbers drop below 50%.
- Breathing is hard – chest or neck may pull in with each breath.
- Gasping for air.



Some medicines you may take to get out of the Red Zone - Asthma Emergency:


- **Oral Steroids** (treat the swelling in the airway)
 - Prednisone
 - Orapred
 - Medrol
 - Prelone*
 - Prednisolone*

Note: These medicines are used for 5-7 days to treat the swelling in the airways. Oral steroids can have side effects when taken for a long time or over and over again.

* Passport Health Plan is not endorsing or recommending one brand of medicine over another. Medicines marked with a star (*) may have a preferred generic form available or need prior authorization from your practitioner.

Passport
HEALTH PLANSM
Administered by
AmeriHealth Mercy

1-800-578-0603 ext. 8307 or 8311
www.passporthealthplan.com

A person is hiking on a rocky trail. They are wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt, dark shorts, blue socks, and grey hiking boots. They are holding a silver trekking pole in their right hand. The background shows a rocky, hilly landscape under a clear sky.

PEAK FLOW METER

- Is a tool that measures breathing.
- Lets you know your asthma is getting worse before you have asthma symptoms (coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath or chest tightness).
- Tells you when to add or stop medicine.
- Helps you decide when to get emergency care.

OTHER MEDICINES

Other medical conditions like allergies and stomach problems can make asthma symptoms worse. Treating these medical conditions can help keep your asthma under control.

Some medicines you can take for allergy and stomach problems are:

- **Allergy Medicines**
 - Claritin
 - Allegra
 - Zyrtec
 - Flonase
 - Nasonex
- **Gastric Reflux Medicines**
 - Prilosec
 - Pepcid
 - Zantac
 - Cimetidine
 - Nexium