



Understanding your asthma medicines

If you have asthma, one key to managing it is to understand your medicines. There are two main types. One controls your symptoms over the long term. The other provides quick relief.

Quick-relief medicines

If your symptoms get worse, these fast-acting medicines can help you breathe again. They often come in inhalers. Some relax the muscles around your airways. Others reduce swelling inside your airways. Your doctor can help you know which type is right for you — and show you how to use it.

Long-term control medicines

Most people with asthma also take a daily medicine. These can help prevent flare-ups. They may relax

your airways and control swelling over time. They often come as pills or inhalers.

Other long-term medicines aim to change how your body responds to allergy triggers. These might be pills — or shots given in your doctor's office.

Know your meds

To get the most from your medicines, you need to take them just as your doctor directs. Your asthma action plan can tell you when and how to take them to keep you breathing well.

Sources: American Lung Association (www.lung.org); National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

Caregivers: Seek the help you deserve

Need support? Ask your loved one's care manager about services that may be open to you.

4 ways to take charge

If you have a chronic condition, take it step by step:

1. Learn all you can about it.
2. Work with your doctor on a care plan.
3. Take your medications.
4. Aim for healthy habits.

Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (www.niddk.nih.gov)

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