Asthma Dot Phrases
Spacer:
Inhaler with spacer / holding chamber: steps for correct use of HFA inhaler with spacer / valved holding chamber reviewed and practiced and then child and parent demonstrated correct use.

Smoking:
Smoke-- keep your child away from all smoke. If anyone in the family is a smoker then the absolutely best thing they can do for their health is to quit. Ask your doctor about new ways to help quit. 1-800-QUIT-NOW is a great place to start (free hotline with free nicotine replacement products)

Routine ICS therapy:
@FNAME@'s asthma CONTROLLER medication is ***
This medicine should be given to help prevent worsening of asthma symptoms.

@FNAME@'s Quick Relief medication is albuterol - this should be given only when your child has wheezing, increased work of breathing (sucking in or under ribs, unable to speak in full sentences without taking a breath), or coughing fits. Give 2-4 puffs with spacer every 4-6 hours as needed until symptoms resolve. Call the office at *** or seek medical attention if your child needs their rescue medicine more often, or needs it for 2 or more days in a row.
We Recommend:
- Reduction of all asthma triggers as much as possible, such as pet dander, dust, mold, cockroaches, and cigarette smoke.
- Please get a Flu vaccine yearly in the fall.
- Smoking cessation for all family members: 1-800-QUIT-NOW is a great place to start (free hotline with free nicotine replacement products).

Using a combination inhaler (Symbicort [budesonide/formoterol] or dulera [mometasone/formoterol]) as a daily controller and quick relief symptoms

<u>5 -11 years old</u>
Using a combination inhaler (Symbicort [budesonide/formoterol] or dulera [mometasone/formoterol]) as a daily controller and quick relief symptoms

Combination inhaler (steroid and long-acting form of albuterol combined in 1 inhaler):

- Take **<u>2 puffs twice daily</u>** and also use 1 puff of combination inhaler (instead of albuterol) every 4-6 hours **as needed for fast relief** of cough or wheezing or shortness of breath. Maximum number of puffs of combination inhaler in 1 day is 8 puffs

12 years and older

Using a combination inhaler (Symbicort [budesonide/formoterol] or dulera [mometasone/formoterol]) as a daily controller and quick relief symptoms

Combination inhaler (steroid and long acting form of albuterol combined in 1 inhaler):

- Take **2 puffs twice daily** and also use 1 puff of combination inhaler (instead of albuterol) every 4-6 hours **as needed for fast relief** of cough or wheezing or shortness of breath. Maximum number of puffs of combination inhaler in 1 day is 12 puffs

Ventolin or Proair HFA (albuterol): fast acting asthma inhaler: Probably will not need to use this anymore except as a back-up. Only to be used if you have already taken 12 puffs of combination inhaler in 24 hours or if you have lost or don't have your combination inhaler.

Helpful Asthma Tips:

- Flu shot (influenza vaccine) is recommended every fall. Children with asthma have higher chance of complications if they catch influenza virus
- Stay informed and learn basic important facts about asthma- ask your asthma specialist team.
- Follow the written personalized asthma home management plan which was reviewed and given to you at today's visit. The plan shows the green zone, yellow zone and red zone and explains when and how much to use of each of your child's asthma medications and also how to call your asthma specialist for questions or advice
- Use asthma inhalers correctly to achieve the most benefit- create and follow a schedule, be motivated, track numeric counter on inhaler, supervise all of your child's doses. Missing doses of asthma control medications reduces effectiveness and makes asthma difficult to control
- REMEMBER: Inhalers must be taken correctly or they will not work. Bring all of your inhalers to each visit so they can be checked by your asthma care team
- Smoke- keep your child away from all smoke. If anyone in the family is a smoker then the absolutely best thing they can do for their health is to QUIT
- Exercise is critically important to stay healthy. All children need at least 1 hour of moderate to strenuous activity each day to stay strong and healthy and prevent excessive weight gain. Lack of regular exercise and excessive weight gain can be especially bad for children with asthma. Unless your child is having an asthma attack, then it is safe for them to exercise and play sports. The only exception is that you may need to be careful exercising outside when it is an air quality alert day (on the local news/weather or www.airnow.gov and enter your zip code).
- Healthy eating and keeping a healthy weight is especially important for children and adults with asthma
- Medication side effects from asthma medications are uncommon, usually minor and easily fixed-call if you have any concerns
- Insurance problems and prior authorizations and medication cost: call us if you are having insurance coverage problems with any of your asthma medications

What Is Asthma?
Asthma is a condition that causes breathing problems. Kids may cough, wheeze, or be short of breath. This happens because airways in the lungs get swollen, smaller, and filled with mucus.

Asthma is common in kids and teens, and tends to run in families. It can be mild or so severe that it gets in the way of daily activities.

With medicine and the right care plan, asthma symptoms can be managed so that kids and teens can do just about anything they want to do.

What Causes Asthma?
No one knows exactly why some people develop asthma. Experts think it might be a combination of environmental factors and genes.

People with asthma may have a parent or other close relative with asthma. Those who are overweight may be more likely to have it.

How Asthma Affects Breathing
In asthma, air doesn't move through the lungs the way it should.

Normally, when someone breathes in, air goes in through the nose or mouth, down the windpipe (trachea), and into the airways (bronchioles) of the lungs. When people breathe out, air exits the body in the opposite direction.

With asthma, air has a harder time passing through. Airways swell and fill with mucus. The muscles around the airways tighten, making airways narrower. Things that can irritate the airways are called "triggers." Common triggers include cigarette smoke, allergies, and exercise.

Triggers can lead to asthma flare-ups or "attacks."

What Are the Signs & Symptoms of Asthma?

Asthma Flare-Ups

Flare-ups are when asthma symptoms get worse. They happen when airways get more irritated and inflamed (swollen) than usual.

During a flare-up, kids might have:

- trouble breathing
- a tight chest
- a whistling sound while breathing (wheezing)
- a cough
- a fast heartbeat
- Some flare-ups are serious, but others are mild. Flare-ups can happen suddenly or build up over time, especially if kids don't take their asthma medicines as directed.

Things that bring on a flare-up are called triggers. Triggers vary from person to person, but common ones include:

- allergies to things like pollen, mold, and pet dander
- irritants and pollutants in the air
- respiratory infections, like colds or flu
- weather conditions
- exercise (some kids only have asthma symptoms during or after exercise)
- gastroesophageal reflux
- An important part of managing asthma is avoiding triggers. Your child's doctor will work with you to create a care plan that helps prevent flare-ups as much as possible.

How Is Asthma Diagnosed?

To diagnose asthma, doctors will ask questions about a child's health, problems with breathing, and family medical history. They'll also ask about any allergies, illnesses, and exposure to things that may make breathing worse.

Kids will have a physical exam and may have a lung function test. This usually involves testing breathing with a spirometer, a machine that analyzes airflow through the airways.

How Is Asthma Treated?

There's no cure for asthma, but it can be managed to prevent flare-ups. Asthma treatment involves two important things: avoiding triggers and taking medicine.

Avoiding Triggers

There are many ways to avoid triggers. After your child's triggers are identified, the doctor will work with you to come up with a plan to avoid them.

For example, if pet dander or mold in your home trigger your child's asthma symptoms, you can make your home asthma-safe by changing the linens often, vacuuming regularly, and keeping the family pet out of your child's bedroom. If outdoor allergies (like pollen) are a problem, your child should avoid the outdoors on days when pollen counts are high.

If exercise is a trigger, the doctor may prescribe a medicine for your child to take before physical activity to prevent airways from tightening up. Doctors help people with exercise-induced asthma manage physical activity, not avoid it. Exercise can help people stay healthier overall (in fact, many pro athletes have asthma!).

Getting a yearly flu shot is also important, as illnesses like the flu can trigger asthma flare-ups.

Asthma Medicines

Most asthma medicines are breathed directly into the lungs (inhaled), but some are pills or liquids. There are two types of asthma medicines:

Quick-relief medicines act fast to open up tight airways. They can be used as needed during a flare-up. Quick-relief medicines act fast, but their effect doesn't last long. These kinds of medicines are also called "fast-acting" or "rescue" medicines.

Long-term control medicines manage asthma by preventing symptoms from happening. They reduce inflammation in the airways, which is the cause of the swelling and mucus. (Quick-relief medicines only treat the symptoms caused by the inflammation.) Long-term control medicines â€” also called "controller" or "maintenance" medicines â€” must be taken every day, even when kids feel well.

Some kids with asthma only need quick-relief medicine; others need both kinds of medicine to keep their asthma in check.

What Else Should I Know?

Asthma care can seem overwhelming, especially at first. But many tools are available to help you care for your child.

An asthma action plan is a care plan that you'll develop with the doctor. The plan gives detailed instructions on how to manage asthma, including:

- what medicines your child needs and when
- what your child's triggers are and how to avoid them
- how to manage a flare-up
- when to get emergency medical care

Following the plan can help your child do normal everyday activities without having asthma symptoms.

Keeping an asthma diary is another way to help manage asthma. Tracking your child's symptoms and medicines will help you know when your child is more likely to have a flare-up.

A peak-flow meter can help too. This handheld tool measures breathing ability. When peak flow readings drop, it's a sign of narrowing airways.

By using these tools, giving medicines as prescribed, and avoiding triggers, you'll help keep your child healthy and breathing well.