

COMMON ASTHMA TRIGGERS

Some common asthma triggers and how to control them

Colds and infections

Have your child avoid people with colds or the flu. Ask your doctor for flu shots for your child. Do not give your child over-the-counter cold remedies such as antihistamines and cough syrup unless your doctor says it's okay.

Tobacco smoke

Do not allow smoking in the home or car. Have household members smoke outside. Do not allow any smoking in your child's bedroom. Encourage family members to quit smoking.

Weather

Have your child wear a scarf over his/her mouth and nose in cold weather. Have your child pull a turtle neck over his/her nose on windy or cold days. Have your child dress warmly in the winter or on windy days.

If your child is allergic to the following things, here are some things you can do:

Cockroaches

Use insect sprays, but only spray when your child is outdoors. Air out your home for a few hours after spraying. Use roach traps.

Animal dander

All warm-blooded pets including dogs, cats, birds, and rodents have animal dander – that is, tiny pieces of skin that flake off. There is no such thing as an allergy-free dog. Also, the length of hair on a pet does not make a difference. The allergen of the pet is in the dander. (It can also be in the saliva and urine).

Remove the animal from the house or school classroom. If you must have a pet, keep the pet out of your child's bedroom. If there is forced-air heating in the home with a pet, close the air ducts into the bedroom. Wash the pet weekly. Avoid visits to friends or relatives with pets. Give the child the asthma medicine suggested by your doctor before visiting places where animals are present. Choose a pet without fur or feathers (e.g. fish).

Exercise

Work out a medicine plan with the doctor that allows your child to exercise without symptoms. Have your child take the medicine before exercising. Have your child do warm-up exercises before doing more active exercises. Have your child try new sports on days he or she is feeling well.

Strong odors and sprays

Painting in the home should be done when your child is not there. Avoid perfume and perfumed cosmetics such as talcum powder and hair spray. Do not use room deodorizers. Use non-perfumed household cleaning products whenever possible. Reduce strong cooking odors (especially frying) by using a fan, and/or opening windows.

House dust mites

These are actions you must take to gain control of dust mites. Put your child's mattress in an airtight cover. Do the same with your child's pillow or wash it weekly. Have your child avoid sleeping or lying on upholstered furniture. Remove carpets that are laid on concrete. Wash your child's bed covers, clothes, and stuffed toys weekly in hot (130°F) water.

Feathers and kapok

Use pillows and bedding that do not contain any feathers or kapok. Stuffing in chairs and other furniture should not contain kapok.

Indoor molds

Keep bathrooms, kitchens and basements well ventilated. Clean bathrooms, kitchens, and basements regularly. Do not use tank-type humidifiers. If humidifiers are needed, keep them clean of mold.

Pollens and molds (outdoor)

Have your child stay indoors when the pollen count is high. Use air-conditioning, if possible. Keep windows closed during seasons of high pollen and mold. Make sure your child stays away from sources of molds (i.e., wet leaves).



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