

**beat
asthma**

What is asthma?



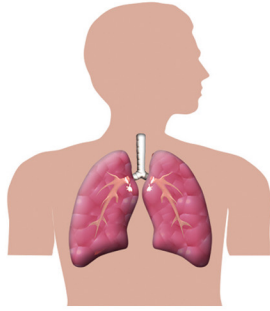
**EasyRead version
for parents**

www.beatasthma.co.uk

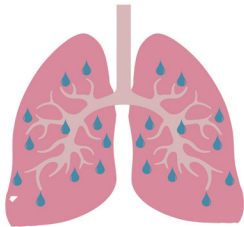
What is asthma?



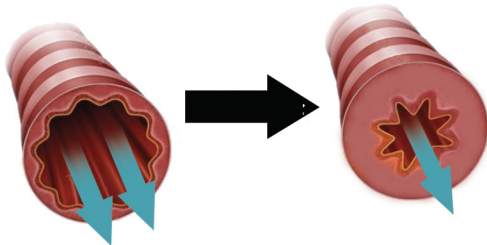
Lots of children and adults have asthma.



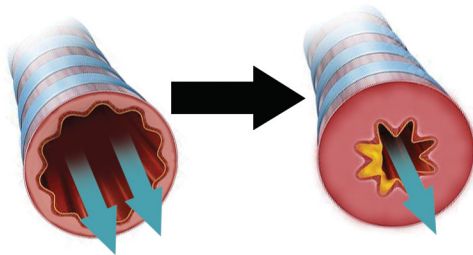
In people with asthma the airways (the small tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs) are more sensitive.



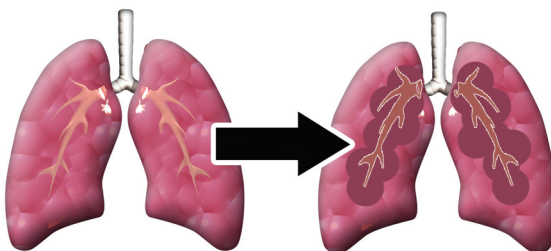
When something irritates these airways 3 things can happen:



1/ The tubes become swollen so there is less space for the air to flow.

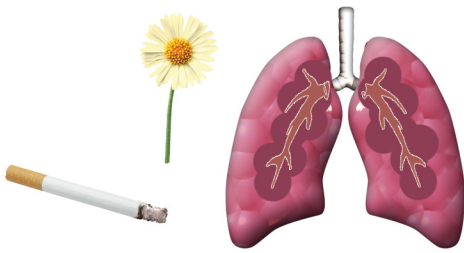


2/ The body makes more mucus which takes up space in the tube so there is less space for the air to flow



3/ The muscles around the tubes get tighter and squeeze them more closed so there is less space for the air to flow.

If there is less space for the air to flow it is harder to breath.



The things that can irritate the airways are called triggers.



But if children with asthma take their medication the right way and go to reviews, they can have a normal life.

What are the signs of asthma?



- Short of breath



- Cough



- Wheeze



- Tight chest
(little children may feel like it is a sore tummy)

Asthma that is properly controlled should have no symptoms at all. If your child does get asthma symptoms, they may :

1. Your child may have asthma symptoms most days.

They may happen in the morning or at night.

They may happen during exercise. It may feel normal for your child to have some symptoms most days but this is not ok.

Asthma that is properly treated should have no symptoms at all.

2. An asthma attack.

This is when the symptoms all of a sudden get worse.

This could be if your child has a cold or been in touch with an irritant.



What medicines does your child need?



Most asthma medicines come in inhalers.

These are:

- Preventers
- Relievers

You should always use a spacer with your child's inhaler.

As your child gets older, they may be able to have an inhaler that does not need a spacer.

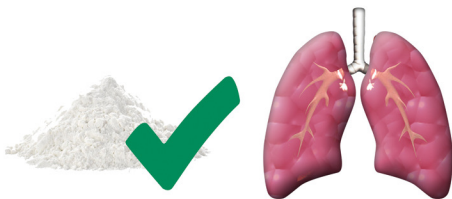
Preventers



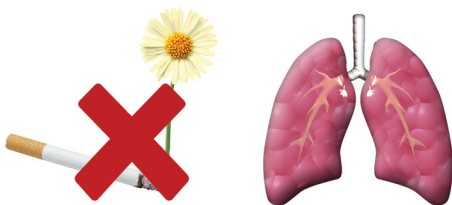
Preventers are usually brown, orange or purple.



There are drugs in preventers.



The drugs look after the airways and help to prevent the swelling.



They can stop the airways being sensitive to triggers.

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18

It can often take up to 6 weeks of using the preventer for it to work fully.



This is why it is important that your child uses their preventer every day.



Your child may have side effects from using an inhaler.

This might be:



- A sore mouth



- A sore throat



- A husky voice



To try and stop this they should clean their teeth or wash their mouth out after using their inhaler.



If they are using a mask with the spacer the mask should be washed every day and have their faces wiped after using.

Relievers



Reliever inhalers are usually blue.



Relievers work by helping the muscles around the airways relax.



This opens up the airways making it easier to breathe.



They work very quickly and last up to 4 hours.

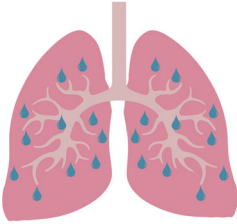


You must make sure your child always has their inhaler with their spacer.

Asthma triggers



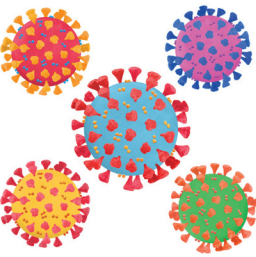
Everyone's asthma is different.



Asthma can be caused by different things. These are called triggers.

Triggers can be:

- Viruses
- Something your child is allergic to like pollen, animals, dust.
- Something that irritates like cold air, smoke, chemicals
- Exercise
- A change in the weather





You can give your child their blue inhaler if you know your child is going to be with a trigger.

They should use it if they get symptoms.

Asthma plans



Your child should have their own asthma action plan.



This may be given by the hospital or GP.



The plan says what you can do to manage your child's asthma.



We hope you found this leaflet of use.



But it is better to talk to your doctor or nurse.



You can ask them questions.



You can look at our website:
www.beatasthma.co.uk