

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASTHMA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



For an Asthma overview, click here... <https://www.aafa.org/asthma.aspx>

The American Lung Association reminds us that asthma is well controlled by monitoring symptoms, avoiding [asthma triggers](#), and taking asthma medicines as prescribed.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC recommends continuing to follow an individual's [asthma action plan](#). These plans should be reviewed regularly by the healthcare provider and any necessary updates should be implemented. The AAP emphasizes that as before the pandemic, [controlling asthma triggers](#) is vital to maintaining health.

Asthma Inhalers Preferred Over Nebulizers During COVID-19 Pandemic

As per the CDC guidance for schools and child care programs:

Students with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend school. Symptoms of asthma and COVID-19 may overlap, including cough and shortness of breath. Therefore, students experiencing acute asthma attacks should not be attending school without approval by a healthcare provider; if an asthma attack starts at school, a student may need a bronchodilator treatment before being sent home or before an ambulance arrives.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, [asthma treatments using inhalers with spacers](#) (with or without face mask, according to each student's individualized treatment plan) are preferred over nebulizer treatments whenever possible. Based on limited data, use of asthma inhalers (with or without spacers or face masks) is not considered an aerosol-generating procedure.

Due to limited availability of data, [it is uncertain whether aerosols generated by nebulizer treatments are potentially infectious](#). During this COVID-19 pandemic, nebulizer treatments at school should be reserved for children who cannot use or do not have access to an inhaler (with or without spacer or face mask).



Given the CDC recommendation, please encourage families to talk to prescribing providers to evaluate the opportunity to transition children from a nebulizer to an inhaler or inhaler with spacer for use in child care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If a child's asthma medication is transitioned to an inhaler please make sure the asthma action plan and medication consent forms are filled out accordingly and training is provided on the correct usage of an inhaler or inhaler with a spacer.

Please review this video from the cdc on the proper usage of an inhaler and an inhaler with a spacer - https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/inhaler_video/default.htm

Here, <https://www.lung.org/blog/back-to-school-with-asthma-during-covid>, the American Lung Association addresses Asthma and use of Masks:

Q: Is it safe for my child with asthma to wear a mask?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone two years of age and older wear a cloth face covering while around others. Children with asthma should be able to wear a cloth face covering if their asthma is well-controlled. Because some children may find it difficult to wear a mask for an extended period, parents should purchase or identify a facial covering that is comfortable for their children to wear. There are many different types of face coverings with a variety of fabrics, designs, straps and fits that may make one mask more comfortable than another.

Q. Is it safe for my child with asthma to wear a mask for extended periods of time?

Children with asthma should be able to wear a non-N95 facial covering without affecting their oxygen levels. Non- N95 facial coverings are currently the recommended public health practice by the CDC for the general public, including children. Have your children practice wearing their face mask at home for an extended period. [Check out our steps](#) to help your children get used to wearing a cloth face covering.

Another factor to consider: Any disinfectant can trigger an asthma attack.

The American Academy of Pediatrics reminds us that: before cleaning and disinfecting, make sure that the area is well ventilated to decrease the risk of exposure to the fumes of the chemicals contained in these products. Chemical fumes may trigger symptoms in people with asthma and allergies.

As our disinfection practices are intensified there are some extra precautions to keep in mind: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/asthma.html>

What if my child has an asthma attack during the pandemic? When should I seek emergency care for a child with asthma?

You can find the answers to these questions here: <https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Caring-for-Children-with-Asthma-During-COVID-19.aspx>



More Resources on Asthma during COVID-19:

<https://acaai.org/news/important-covid-19-information-those-asthma-and-or-allergies>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-asthma.html>

<https://community.aafa.org/blog/coronavirus-2019-ncov-flu-what-people-with-asthma-need-to-know>