

**What to Expect at School for a Child with Asthma
Including
Internet Resources for Parents and Guardians of School Aged Children with Asthma**

Asthma is one of the most common illnesses of childhood. Parents and guardians may wonder what to expect when a child with asthma is at school. The following information includes steps parents can take to help students with asthma while they are at school. Please contact your school nurse for questions or to talk about information that may help your child at school. You can contact the Humboldt County Office of Education school nurses through the Health Team website www.humboldt.k12.ca.us/sps/healthteam/ or by calling 445-7051.

Medication

- If your child's doctor and you have determined that **no medication** for asthma is needed during school hours, inform the school by writing that your child has asthma on the student registration form and field trip information form. Notify your child's teacher, after school provider and/or coach at the beginning of each school year.
- For students who **do need asthma medication at school**, follow the above steps plus contact the school secretary for a "Consent to give Medication at School" form. The parent or legal guardian and your child's doctor will need to sign the form. Asthma medication may be kept with the student or in the school office depending on the child's health needs and the maturity level of the student. Talk to your child and your child's doctor to help understand what would be the best medication plan at school. Make sure the medication for asthma is current by checking the expiration date, and that the medication brought to school is the same one listed on the "Consent to give Medication at School" form. Replenish the medication if it is running low or near to the expiration date. If parents/guardians determine, along with a child's doctor, that the student's asthma requires the student to carry medication at all times while at school, the doctor will need to indicate so on the permission to give medication at school form.

Education for the Educators

- Be sure to discuss with your child's teacher, after school provider, coach or the school nurse what may bring on or worsen asthma for your child.
- Inform the adults at school who are responsible for your child's care what are early symptoms of asthma for your child.
- Consider setting up an "Asthma Action Plan" with the school nurse to help the school be better informed about your individual child's needs.
- Keep your emergency contact phone numbers current with the school as home, work and cell phone numbers change.
- Make certain your child's teacher or other adults responsible for your child's care know your child's health history so they know what to expect and respond efficiently.

- Most schools do not regularly have a school nurse on site, but you can talk to your school's nurse to contribute to the support plan that will be in place for school staff.

Reassurance

Your child and you will feel more confident at school if you've talked about what he or she will need to do if an asthma episode occurs during school or afterschool activities. Empower your child to learn self care by talking about how her or his body feels when an asthma episode occurs. Talk about what brings on asthma and strategize together how to avoid or minimize triggers when possible. Plan ahead of time what he or she can do to feel better when symptoms arise. Get specific about which adult your child would need to inform and where her or his medication would be found.

Internet Resources

As parents and guardians work to better understand how to help their child with asthma, many turn to the internet to gather information. Parents and guardians are encouraged to consider the reliability of the information available on the internet. The following list is presented to help parents and guardians locate internet sources offering accurate, credible information on asthma in school aged children. Always contact your child's doctor to discuss the **safety** and **effectiveness** of treatment options you are investigating.

- www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/asthma/index.htm A website by the Center for Disease Control
- www.kidshealth.org A website with sections for kids, parents and teens by Nemours, a private, non-profit organization dedicated to children's health
- <http://health.nih.gov/topic/AsthmainChildren/ChildTeenHealth> A website by the National Institutes of Health
- <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/atoz.htm> A website for complementary and alternative treatment, part of the National Institutes of Health (very few studies related to asthma)
- www.lungusa.org/lung-disease/asthma/ A website by the American Lung Association
- www.asthmaeducationcenter.net A feature on the California Breathing website that includes short, easy-to-understand video segments, including direct links to the best asthma resources and support available.