

30 Questions Respiratory Therapists  
Want You To Ask Your Physician About...

# Your Asthma



1. What is asthma?
2. What kinds of tests should I get to be sure I have it?
3. How did I get asthma?
4. Is asthma hereditary?
5. Do you follow the National Institutes of Health's "NAEPP Expert Panel Report 3" guidelines for the management of asthma?
6. Should I be getting immunizations such as the flu shot and pneumonia shot? If so, which ones should I get, and how often should I get them?
7. How are you planning to treat my asthma, and why did you choose these treatments for me?
8. How do these treatments work?
9. What's the difference between the quick-relief medication and the controller medication?



This guide is provided by the American Association for Respiratory Care  
More guides are available at [yourlunghealth.org/ask/](http://yourlunghealth.org/ask/)

10. What kind of side effects do these treatments have, and what can I do about them?
11. Who will teach me how to use my asthma inhalers correctly?
12. Are there any asthma education programs in our community that I could attend to learn more about asthma?
13. Are there any alternative medications that could help my asthma?
14. Will my smoking, or the smoking of people who live in my home, affect my asthma?
15. Can secondhand smoke affect my asthma even if the person smokes outside?
16. Do I have to give away my pets just because I have asthma?
17. What are some of the things that can make my asthma worse, and what can I do to minimize my exposure to them?
18. Should I be tested to see what I am allergic to? What kinds of allergy tests should I have?
19. If I test positive, should I get allergy shots?
20. Can I still exercise or play sports?



21. If I do play sports, what precautions should I take?
22. Are there any activities that I shouldn't do because of my asthma?
23. When does my child need to stay home from school because of asthma?
24. How can I tell if my asthma is getting worse, and what should I do if that happens?
25. Should I be using a peak flow meter to measure how well I am breathing?
26. How often should I be getting pulmonary function testing?
27. How often should I see my clinician?
28. What kind of financial assistance is available to help me cover the costs of my asthma medications?
29. Will you give me an asthma action plan to help me manage my asthma?
30. When should I call your office or go to the emergency room if my asthma gets worse?



**Prepared with input from:** AARC members Karen Gregory, RRT, AE-C, FAARC, advanced practice nurse, respiratory therapist, and certified asthma educator at the Oklahoma Allergy & Asthma Clinic in Oklahoma City, OK; and Rhonda Vosmus, RRT-NPS, AE-C, asthma education specialist for the AH! Asthma Health Program at Maine Medical Center in Portland, ME.