



# FALL FOCUS ON ASTHMA

Fall — back-to-school time — starts the cold and flu season. Colds, flu, and other viruses are key asthma triggers and spread easily in school settings.

For parents of a child with asthma, Fall means extra planning to make sure that your child's asthma stays well managed. Your child's school staff plays a key role. Make sure teachers, school nurses, coaches, and others know that your child has asthma and what to do to help manage it.

## Before school starts:

- Make sure that your child's asthma is well managed. Warning signs that his or her asthma is NOT managed well include coughing at night or not being able to keep up with other children's physical activity.
- Have an asthma-only doctor visit and talk about any warning signs you see.
- Make sure all asthma prescriptions are current and filled.
- Work with your child's doctor to develop a written Asthma Action Plan and talk with your child about it. The plan should include details about your child's:
  - Triggers
  - Medicines
  - Physical activity (for example, using an inhaler before exercise if appropriate)
  - Emergency plan, including what to do if your child has trouble breathing

## At school:

- Make sure your child knows how to manage his or her asthma while at school.
- Give your child's teachers, school nurse, coaches, gym teacher, and bus driver a copy of the Asthma Action Plan and discuss it with them.
- Encourage the school to:
  - Have a written policy that allows children to take asthma medications at school as prescribed by their doctor and permitted by parent
  - Be smoke free
  - Have an asthma education program for all school staff and students
  - Monitor indoor air quality

## Flu Shot

Talk to your doctor about when your family should get a flu shot. For people with asthma, preventing the flu may reduce asthma symptoms.

Work with the school staff to help your child stay active, play sports, and have fun!  
When asthma is well managed, your child can live a normal life.

