



Preparing for School with Asthma

If your child has asthma, it is important to start preparing for school early. All children in Illinois with asthma are allowed to carry and use their quick-relief asthma inhaler while at school, so you'll want to make sure your child knows how to use his or her inhaler during the school day.

Begin letting your child use his or her quick-reliever at least six months before starting school. By practicing together, you can ensure your child is using the inhaler correctly and does not have your help. There will be mistakes, so it is best that you are there to correct them.

Be sure to teach your child:

- That it is important to always keep his or her asthma medicine nearby.
- What triggers his or her asthma and how to avoid these triggers at school.
- How to recognize his or her asthma signs and symptoms.
- How to tell an adult when asthma symptoms start.
- When to use quick-reliever medicine.
- How to use quick-reliever medicine with a spacer.

Ensure that your school has the necessary materials:

As of August 2010, in accordance with Illinois Public Act 096-1460, your child does not need a doctor's note to carry and use a quick-relief asthma inhaler at school.

The school does need:

- You to fill out and promptly return all required forms, including documentation of an asthma diagnosis.
- A note signed by you explaining that your child can carry and use his or her quick-relief inhaler.
- The prescription label off of your child's medication box.

Make sure the school is ready for your child:

- Call and meet with school staff to file an Individualized Health Care Plan (504 plan), a legal document that provides modifications to your child while at school.
- Ensure that the nurse and teacher have an [asthma action plan](#). An asthma action plan is a written document that explains your child's asthma triggers, symptoms, medicines and actions to take during an asthma episode.
- Provide two inhalers whenever possible. Your child should carry one with him/her, and the school staff should keep a backup.
- Provide the school with emergency contact information so you or someone else can be reached in an emergency.