



Asthma Word Search



handwashing	medication	trigger	virus
steroid	breathe	cough	flu
inhaler	vaccine	sneeze	cold



**Weill Cornell
Medicine**
Pediatric
Asthma Program



Asthma Newsletter

Snow Much Fun Edition - Winter 2024

A collaboration between NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center and NewYork-Presbyterian Queens

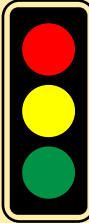
MEDucation Corner

- Why do we use steroids for asthma?**
They help reduce inflammation/swelling in the lungs and mucus production.
- What's the difference between my inhaler with steroids and oral steroids (like liquid or tablets)?**
Inhaled corticosteroids (ICS):
 - The inhaler delivers much smaller doses of steroids that are taken daily.
 - ICS medications work *locally* and directly affect the airways.
 Oral steroids:
 - Oral steroids are typically only given for a few days for severe asthma exacerbations.
 - Oral steroids are more *systemic*, meaning it affects your whole body. Because of this, they usually have different side effects than the ICS inhaler.

- What should I know about steroid use for my asthma?**
It's important to take your inhaled corticosteroid daily if it's a part of your asthma regimen in order to manage your asthma and prevent the use of oral steroids.

Tips and Tricks: Navigating a Hospital Admission for a Child with Asthma

Asthma Action Plan (AAP)
An AAP is a written, individualized plan to manage asthma symptoms.



Red zone indicates a severe worsening of your child's asthma and tells you when you should seek medical help right away. The AAP will have instructions and your asthma care team's contact information.
Yellow zone indicates a presence of asthma symptoms and provides guidance on how to manage these symptoms from home.
Green zone indicates no asthma symptoms, so no additional interventions other than routine medications are required.

- When to bring your child to the ER**
- 1 If your child develops difficulty breathing, lips or fingernails turn blue/pale/gray, are unable to speak in full sentences, or have any changes in alertness level
 - 2 If the rescue medications have not helped or symptoms remain the same or worsen after 24 hours in the Yellow Zone, please seek emergency medical help right away.

Pulmonary/Asthma team
Before discharge, you should make an appointment with our team's asthma specialist. They will help to determine the best treatment plan, provide guidance on lifestyle changes, and conduct Pulmonary Function Testing (PFTs) to determine your child's lung function levels.

Primary Care Provider
After any stay in the hospital, you should follow up with your child's Primary Care Provider (PCP) 1-2 days after discharge to make sure your child is following the expected course. The PCP can provide additional education and address any gaps in care that occurred during the hospital admission.

Medication Administration Form (MAF)
If your child's healthcare provider has prescribed them a rescue inhaler and they are in daycare or school during the day, the school nurse or daycare manager should have rescue medication on hand in case of an emergency. In addition to having the medication, there must also be a medication administration form (MAF), a document signed by your provider that allows your child to receive medications at school.

Medications
It is essential to know the different purposes of your child's asthma medications. A **controller medication** is generally prescribed daily or twice per day, and a **rescue medication** is taken as needed.

All inhalers, unless otherwise specified, should be used with a spacer chamber for the best medication delivery!

If you have questions or would like additional asthma information, email us at PedsAsthma@med.cornell.edu or visit our website using this QR code!



What do you want to see on future newsletters?
Use this QR code to give us feedback.



Religious and Spiritual Considerations for Asthma Management

Religious beliefs can influence medication adherence due to different views on health, healing, and acceptable treatments. One specific practice that some religions have is **fasting**. Fasting practices vary widely across religions, but the general principle is to abstain from food, drink, or both for a set period.

Two examples are:

1. From sunrise to sunset during Ramadan for those who practice Islam
2. From sundown to sundown during Yom Kippur for those that practice Judaism

During these fasts, considerations like the necessity to take the medication, medication time adjustment, and severity of the disease are taken. Conversations between the patient, medical provider, and spiritual leader must take place beforehand to ensure that there are no risks for further health issues.

Discussing fasting practices with your healthcare provider can help to create an accommodating medication schedule, provide alternatives, or suggest safe fasting adjustments. Involving a spiritual leader can provide reassurance for acceptable practices.

Strategies during fasting may include:

Adjusting Dosage Timing: For medications that can be taken twice a day, healthcare providers may suggest taking them before dawn and after sunset.

Extended-Release Medications: Switching to long-acting medications, where available, may allow patients to maintain therapeutic effects while fasting.

Hydration: For patients who are able to consume fluids after fasting hours, staying hydrated can help lessen side effects of fasting on medication efficacy.

Partial Fasts: In cases where complete fasting may jeopardize health, partial fasting (avoiding specific food types) may be an acceptable alternative, depending on religious guidelines.

*Many religious traditions also emphasize the importance of health. For patients who can't safely fast due to the necessity of taking medications, exemptions are often an acceptable choice. Consulting both medical and religious professionals can help to make informed, respectful choices that align with beliefs and health needs.



Handwashing

Handwashing is one of the best ways to help protect yourself and your family from getting sick.

You should wash your hands:

- Before and after eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing



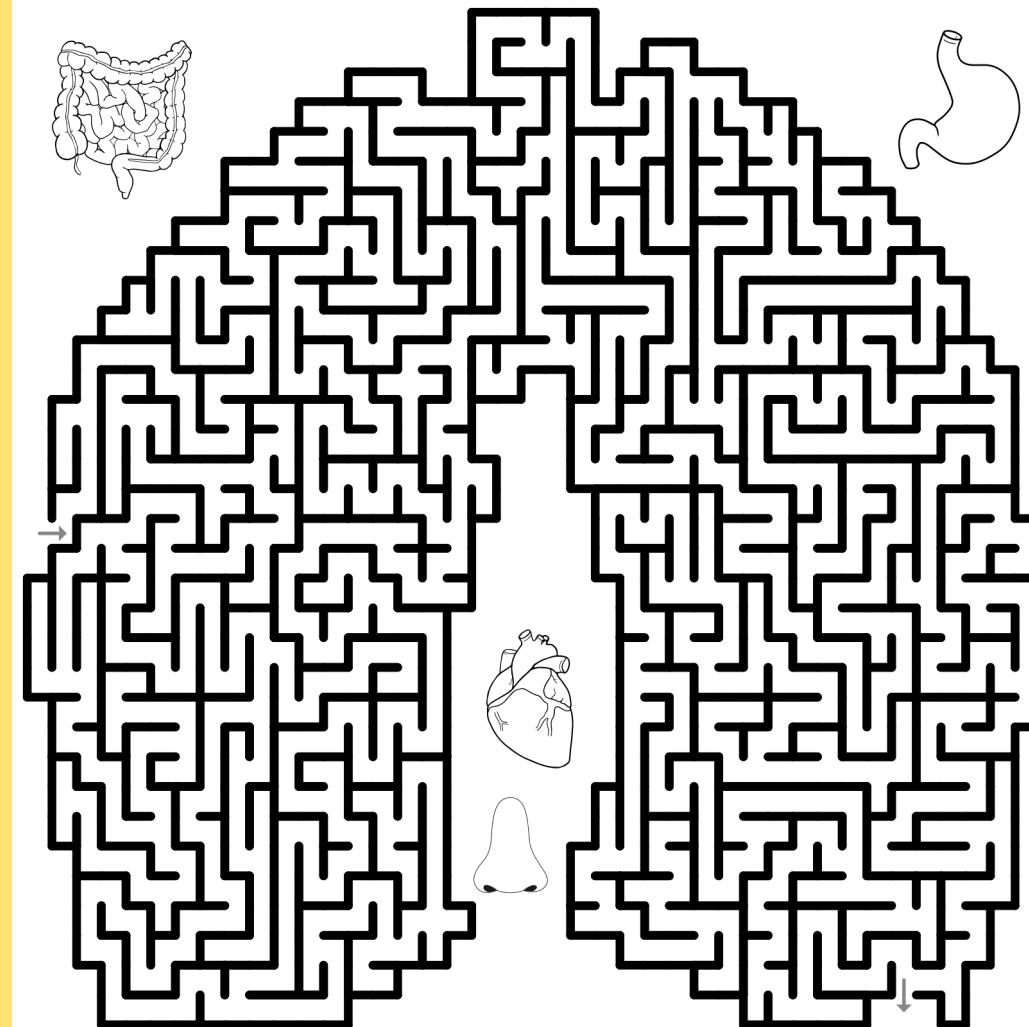
HOW should you wash your hands?

1. Wet your hands under clean running water
2. Lather your hands, front and back, with soap. Scrub between your fingers and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds (sing or hum the "Happy Birthday" song twice!)
4. Rinse your hand under clean running water
5. Dry your hands with a clean towel or an air dryer

****When you don't have soap and water, use hand sanitizer!****

Lung Maze

Find your way through the maze!



 Beeloo



The Flu Vaccine!

What is a Flu Shot?

The flu shot is a **vaccine** that helps protect against the flu. The flu vaccine is not 100% effective against all seasonal flu strains, but **getting a flu vaccine every year is the best way to prevent the flu**. It can also help to lessen the severity of flu symptoms and reduce risk of hospitalization and complications from the flu virus.

Who Should Get a Flu Shot?

The CDC recommends that everyone six months and older gets an annual flu shot. Children with asthma, and children younger than 5 years old, are at **higher risk of hospitalization** and more serious flu complications.

Where and when can I get the flu vaccine?

Refer to your primary care physician (PCP) or pharmacist at your local pharmacy. It's best to receive flu vaccine early in the fall (September-October), at the start of flu season, however, it can be given at any time during flu season, through May.

Side Effects of the Flu Vaccine

The flu vaccine **does not** cause the flu. Generally, any side effects from the flu shot are mild compared to flu symptoms and last for one or two days, and can include: redness, soreness, swelling at the site of the injection, muscle aches, headache, fever, nausea, and fatigue.

What if my child is sick, can they get a flu vaccine?

Yes, it is safe to receive a flu vaccine even with another minor illness. If your child has a more severe illness or high fever, your doctor may wait to vaccinate them until they recover.

What about the Nasal Flu Vaccine?

Nasal spray influenza (flu) vaccines for the 2024-2025 season protect against three influenza viruses: an influenza A(H1N1) virus, an influenza A(H3N2) virus and one influenza B virus.

*Nasal spray flu vaccine is approved for children 2 and older. They should NOT be used for 2-4 year olds with asthma or those who have had wheezing in the last 12 month, and should be used with caution for children older than 5 with asthma.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) can help eligible New Yorkers heat and cool their homes. If you are eligible, you may receive one regular HEAP benefit per program year and could also be eligible for emergency HEAP benefits if you are in danger of running out of fuel or having your utility service shut off.

Scan this code to learn more about program eligibility and how to apply.

