

# 3 STAGE PLAN

## Using a spacer

If you use a metered dose inhaler (MDI), a spacer will help get the correct dose of medication into your lungs.

Ask your doctor about a spacer, they can provide them free of charge. If you don't already have one, you need one. Spacers increase your medications effectiveness.

1. Shake the inhaler well (holding it upright)
2. Fit the inhaler into the opening at the end of the spacer
3. Seal lips firmly around the mouth piece,
  - press the inhaler once only
4. Take 4-6 slow breaths in and out through your mouth. Do not remove the spacer from your mouth between breaths
  - Remove the spacer from your mouth
5. Repeat steps 1-4 for further doses



This asthma action plan is completed with your doctor or nurse to help control your asthma. Your plan explains how to control your asthma long term, it helps to identify what to do when you are well, unwell or need help in an emergency.

If you have any questions about how to use this plan discuss it with your doctor or nurse.

### Remember:

- Keep your action plan up to date
- Make sure your inhalers aren't empty or out of date
- Take your medications as prescribed
- Ensure you always carry your reliever
- Regularly check your inhaler technique with your doctor or nurse

**See your doctor for an influenza vaccination every March**

Produced by the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation NZ

**Asthma  
+ Respiratory**  
FOUNDATION NZ

📍 Level 3, Ranchhod Tower, 39 The Terrace, Wellington 6011

📧 PO Box 1459, Wellington 6140

☎ 04 499 4592 📠 04 499 4594

@ info@asthmaandrespiratory.org.nz

🌐 asthmaandrespiratory.org.nz

**Asthma  
+ Respiratory**  
FOUNDATION NZ

# 3 STAGE Asthma Action Plan



This Asthma Action Plan belongs to:

**Better breathing, better living**

## Washing your spacer

Wash your spacer once a week with warm water and dishwashing liquid.

**Do not rinse, drip dry** to ensure that your medicine gets into your lungs and doesn't stick to the sides of the spacer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of plan: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Know your asthma symptoms**

**Know when and how to take your medicine**

Feeling good

**Your asthma is under control when**

- you don't have asthma symptoms most days (wheeze, tight chest, a cough or feeling breathless)
- you have no cough or wheeze at night
- you can do all your usual activities and exercise freely
- most days you don't need a reliever

Your peak flow reading is above

Preventer [name]	puffs	every morning
	puffs	every night
Reliever [name]	puffs	when you need it to relieve your asthma symptoms

**Remember:**

We strongly suggest that you use a spacer, if one can be used with your preventer inhaler.

Carry your reliever at all times

Severe

**Caution- your asthma is getting severe when**

- your symptoms are getting severe (wheeze, tight chest, a cough or feeling breathless)
- your reliever is only helping for 2-3 hours, or you are using more than 12 puffs a day
- you feel you need to see your doctor

Your peak flow reading is below

**Let's take action...**

- Continue your regular medicine
- Start prednisone if you have it:

Prednisone	mg	for	days
and then	mg	for	days

**Important:** You need to see your doctor today

**Other instructions:**


Emergency

**Emergency**

- your symptoms are getting more severe quickly
- you are finding it hard to speak or breathe
- your reliever is not helping much
- you are using your reliever every 1-2 hours

Your peak flow reading is below

**Let's keep calm...**

- Dial 111 for ambulance
- Keep using your reliever as often as needed – through a spacer, if one can be used with your reliever inhaler
- Even if you seem to get better seek medical help right away
- If you haven't started taking your prednisone, start now

Best peak flow: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Next review date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_