

Colds and flu = flare-ups

Be asthma ready this winter.



The flu and other viral infections are the most common trigger for asthma flare-ups. Although you can't always prevent colds and flu, you can lower your risk of a cold or flu triggering an asthma flare-up.

Follow our asthma checklist to ensure you're ready for the winter cold and flu season.

Visit your doctor for an asthma review

With your doctor:

- assess your current level of asthma control
- make sure you are on the right medicines to manage your asthma (e.g. a preventer)
- check your inhaler technique
- ensure your Asthma Action Plan is up-to-date
- ask any questions

Take the Asthma Control Test

If you have experienced any of the following in the last four weeks it indicates your asthma may not be under good control.

- daytime asthma symptoms more than 2 days per week
- need for reliever more than 2 days per week
- any limitation on activities due to asthma symptoms
- any asthma symptoms during the night or on waking

Take the Asthma Control Test at www.asthmaaustralia.org.au to get your Asthma Score.

Preventer – every day when well

Most adults with asthma should have preventer medication. Daily use of a preventer is key to keeping well. Regular use of your preventer makes the airways less sensitive and will reduce your symptoms.

Check your device technique

Up to 90% of people are thought to use their inhalers incorrectly, which means the dose of medicine isn't getting into the lungs. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to check you are using your inhaler medication device correctly.

Get a written Asthma Action Plan

With your doctor, develop a written Asthma Action Plan.

Follow a written Asthma Action Plan for:

- better controlled asthma
- fewer asthma attacks
- fewer days off work or school
- reduced reliever medication use
- fewer hospital visits

Consider an annual flu vaccination

The best way to protect yourself from the flu and spreading it to others is annual flu vaccination.

The flu virus is always changing, so it is important to have the flu vaccine every year. This will ensure you and your family are protected against the most recent flu virus strains that maybe around. It is best to be vaccinated from mid-April so your body has time to protect itself and you are ready for the peak flu period, from around June to September. It's never too late to be vaccinated. Everyone with asthma including all family members should be immunised against the flu, especially people with severe asthma.



Asthma Australia

For more information call **1800 ASTHMA** Helpline (1800 278 462)
or visit asthmaaustralia.org.au/colds-and-flu #asthmaready4winter