



[KidsHealth.org/classroom](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom)

## Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

## Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Your state's school health policies:  
[nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State\\_Policy.asp](http://nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State_Policy.asp)

Breathing is easy to take for granted. You may think it's something that comes naturally to everyone, but for people with asthma, breathing can be very difficult at times. Your students may know someone who has asthma and they may have seen someone use an inhaler, but how much do they know about asthma? The following discussion questions and activities will help your students learn about this condition and how it can affect people's lives.

## Related KidsHealth Links

### Articles for Teens:

#### Asthma

[KidsHealth.org/teen/diseases\\_conditions/allergies\\_immune/asthma.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/allergies_immune/asthma.html)

#### How Can I Deal With My Asthma?

[KidsHealth.org/teen/question/illness\\_infection/asthma\\_mgmt.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/question/illness_infection/asthma_mgmt.html)

#### Smoking and Asthma

[KidsHealth.org/teen/drug\\_alcohol/tobacco/smoking\\_asthma.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/drug_alcohol/tobacco/smoking_asthma.html)

#### How to Avoid the ER if You Have Asthma

[KidsHealth.org/teen/diseases\\_conditions/allergies\\_immune/er\\_asthma.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/allergies_immune/er_asthma.html)

#### What's an Asthma Flare-up?

[KidsHealth.org/teen/asthma\\_basics/what/flare\\_up.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/asthma_basics/what/flare_up.html)

#### School and Asthma

[KidsHealth.org/teen/managing\\_asthma/charge/school\\_asthma.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/managing_asthma/charge/school_asthma.html)

#### How Do Asthma Medicines Work?

[KidsHealth.org/teen/asthma\\_basics/monitoring/asthma\\_medicines.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/asthma_basics/monitoring/asthma_medicines.html)

#### What's a Peak Flow Meter?

[KidsHealth.org/teen/asthma\\_basics/monitoring/peak\\_flow\\_meter.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/asthma_basics/monitoring/peak_flow_meter.html)

## Discussion Questions

*Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

1. What is asthma? What do you think it would feel like to have it?
2. What's an asthma flare-up? What triggers do you think could cause a flare-up?
3. How do people control their asthma? Does it affect their ability to play sports or do other activities?



## Activities for Students

*Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

### Air Traffic Control

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn about the challenges for teens with asthma
- Become part of a support system to help peers control asthma

#### Materials:

- Pen and paper

#### Class Time:

25 minutes

#### Activity:

Many teens do a good job of controlling their asthma, but some of them could use some help. It's time for Air Traffic Control, a new program you and your classmates will start to help students at your school control their asthma.

As a class, brainstorm all the things you know about how your peers are controlling their asthma. Write your ideas on the board. Do they take medications at school? Do they go to the nurse? Do they carry inhalers? Consider their school activities, too. Do teens with asthma participate in school activities? Sports? PE class? And what asthma triggers do teens face at school?

Now, split into three groups - activities, triggers, and treatments. The activities group will list the things that students with asthma could do to help control their asthma and participate in activities. The triggers group will list ways students can avoid triggers at school. And the treatments group will list suggestions for managing medications and peak flow readings during the school day.

#### Extensions:

1. Talk with someone who has asthma and ask three questions: 1) What do you wish your classmates knew about asthma?; 2) Is there anything that could make it easier for you to control your asthma during the school day?; and 3) What could other students do to help? Write an instructional Air Traffic Control pamphlet for students. Tell them what they need to know about asthma and how they can help their classmates who have the condition.
2. Create an Air Traffic Control Center for your school's health center or nurse's office. Include your pamphlets and your groups' tip sheets for students with asthma.



## Working Together Against Asthma

### Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn about environmental triggers
- Determine how the government and health-related organizations can help people with asthma
- Advocate persuasively to help meet the needs of people with asthma

### Materials:

- Computer and printer, or pen and paper
- Internet access or school library

### Class Time:

30 minutes

### Activity:

You may have heard asthma described as a public health problem - that's because it affects a lot of people and the government and various health-related organizations try to help people with the condition.

In a one-page essay, describe what you think the government and organizations can do to help people with asthma. For example, how might they address air quality problems? How can they help kids in the city, who are more likely to have asthma? How can they help encourage healthy behaviors and discourage unhealthy ones? How can they help people get the treatments they need?

### Extensions:

1. Public health problems are also addressed in schools. Write a one-page essay describing what can be done in your school to help students with asthma control their symptoms. Can students help, too?
2. Smoking is a major trigger. Some people are in favor of banning smoking in public places, and some are against it. Write a one-page essay supporting a smoking ban based on the needs of people with asthma. Be sure to include concrete facts to convince your reader.

## Reproducible Materials

### Quiz: Asthma

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/conditions/asthma\\_quiz.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/conditions/asthma_quiz.pdf)

### Answer Key: Asthma

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/conditions/asthma\\_quiz\\_answers.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/conditions/asthma_quiz_answers.pdf)



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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question.

1. When people have asthma, their airways can be overly sensitive to:
  - a. exercise
  - b. dust
  - c. cigarette smoke
  - d. all of the above
  
2. A person having an asthma flare-up:
  - a. may cough, wheeze, and be short of breath
  - b. can't get any air into the lungs
  - c. can stop the flare-up by avoiding triggers
  - d. often continues to have symptoms after it is over
  
3. True or false:
  - Smells from perfumes, cosmetics, cleaning solutions, paint, and gasoline can trigger asthma symptoms. T F
  - Exercise-induced asthma usually means the end of participating in sports. T F
  - Weather can trigger asthma symptoms. T F
  - Asthma can cause respiratory tract infections. T F
  - Laughing and crying can sometimes trigger an asthma flare-up. T F
  
4. Asthma is treated in two ways:
  - a. with antihistamines and air purifiers
  - b. by building resistance to triggers and keeping the house clean
  - c. by avoiding potential triggers and with medication
  - d. with a nebulizer or drugs
  
5. People with asthma typically need two kinds of medications:
  - a. nasal decongestants to minimize mucus and antihistamines to control allergic reactions
  - b. fast-acting medications to stop symptoms and long-term medications to prevent symptoms
  - c. pills and liquids
  - d. an expectorant for coughing and an antihistamine for allergies
  
6. It's very important to monitor asthma and prevent flare-ups. An asthma journal and peak flow meter can help.

A peak flow meter:

  - a. measures oxygen levels during an asthma flare-up
  - b. helps people measure their asthma medications
  - c. should not be used when a person is having symptoms
  - d. uses green, yellow, and red color-coded readings to tell people if their asthma is under control



## Quiz Answer Key

- When people have asthma, their airways can be overly sensitive to:
  - exercise
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  - all of the above
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- True or false:
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- Asthma is treated in two ways:
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- People with asthma typically need two kinds of medications:
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  - an expectorant for coughing and an antihistamine for allergies
- It's very important to monitor asthma and prevent flare-ups. An asthma journal and peak flow meter can help.

A peak flow meter:

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  - uses green, yellow, and red color-coded readings to tell people if their asthma is under control