

Asthma Management

When to Carry On and When to Seek Care



Safe Zone | Breathing Is Good

You're in the safe zone if:

- You have no coughing or wheezing.
- Your chest is not tight.
- You have no shortness of breath.
- You are able to work, play, and sleep without difficulty.

The safe zone means you are in control. Continue taking controller medications as prescribed.



Warning Zone | Breathing Is Getting Worse

You're in the warning zone if:

- You are coughing and/or wheezing.
- Your chest is tight.
- You have shortness of breath during the day or night.
- You have difficulty exercising.

The warning zone means you need to consult your doctor. You may need to increase your medication and adjust your asthma action plan.

Remember: If you are in the warning zone, call your doctor. Do not wait until you need emergency care to seek help.



Medical Alert Zone | Breathing Is Difficult

You're in the medical alert zone if:

- Your breathing is hard and fast.
- You have difficulty talking.
- You can't perform normal daily activities.

The medical alert zone means you should take action now. Contact your doctor right away and follow the steps in your asthma action plan, taking reliever and/or rescue medications as instructed. If you are still having severe trouble breathing even 20–30 minutes after taking your medication, call 911 and get emergency help.

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/asthma/treatment-action-plan>