






## Asthma Triggers

Children with asthma have sensitive airways and many things around them can make their asthma worse. The things around your child that cause an asthma attack are called triggers. Triggers are different for each child. Their doctor can help figure out what their triggers are. Try to keep your child away from these triggers, especially at home and school where your child spends most of their time.

**If your child has asthma symptoms such as cough, trouble breathing, or wheezing, follow their “Asthma Action Plan”.**

### Common asthma triggers:

#### Irritants

	<p><b>Smoke</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being around smoke can be harmful to a child with asthma and increases the chance of having an asthma attack.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tobacco or Marijuana Smoke</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DO NOT let anyone smoke inside your house or car</li> <li>If you can, quit smoking             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for help from the Colorado Quitline</li> </ul> </li> <li>You should only smoke outside             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear a “smoking jacket” and leave it outside</li> </ul> </li> <li>Wash your hands after smoking</li> <li>Keep your child away from places where people smoke</li> <li>Also avoid electronic cigarettes and vaping</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Wood Smoke</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't use a wood burning stove for heat or a wood fireplace</li> <li>Avoid campfires</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Strong Smells</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't use air fresheners, perfume, cologne, room spray, or hair spray</li> <li>The strong smells can trigger an asthma attack</li> <li>Use unscented cleaning products</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Pollution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the pollution is high, have your child stay indoors</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Illness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your child should avoid people who are sick</li> <li>Make sure your child gets a flu shot every year</li> <li>Follow your child's “Asthma Action Plan”</li> </ul>

**Cold Air**

- Have your child wear a clean scarf or pull their turtleneck around their face
- Tell your child to breathe through their nose when they are outside in the cold air
- Your child can also take 2 puffs of albuterol before going outside when it's cold

## Allergens

**Pollen & Outdoor Mold**



- Keep house and car windows closed during allergy season
- Use central air conditioning or fans when you can
- Mow your lawn often and keep the grass short to cut down on pollen
  - If your child is allergic to grass, they shouldn't mow the lawn
- You can check pollen counts [online](#) or in local weather reports
- Stay indoors when pollen and mold counts are high
- Have your child take a shower and change their clothes after being outside during high-pollen seasons
- Don't hang your clothes outside to dry
- Talk to your doctor about allergy medicines and saline nasal rinses

**Indoor Mold**



- Keep your bathrooms and kitchen clean and well ventilated
- If you find mold, use a bleach solution (1 part bleach and 10 parts water) to clean the area (**children with asthma should never use bleach or other chemicals with strong smells**)
- Keep indoor humidity at less than 40%
- Fix all water leaks and remove any standing water
- Have your heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems cleaned often and repaired right away

**House Dust**

- Wash stuffed toys and bedding in hot water (130°F) every week
- Keep stuffed animals off the bed
- Cut down on clutter
- Bare floors are best
  - If you have carpet, vacuum it often
- Take down drapes and blinds when possible
- Put mattresses, pillows, and box springs in allergen proof coverings
- If you have a forced-air furnace, change the dust filters regularly during the heating season

	<p><b>Animals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any animal that has feathers or fur can cause an allergic reaction. <b>There are no hypoallergenic dogs or cats.</b></li> <li>Pets can bring outdoor pollens inside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's best to keep your pets outside</li> </ul> </li> <li>Always keep pets out of your child's bedroom</li> <li>Have your child wash their hands and change their clothes after playing with pets</li> <li>Brush your pets outside every day and give them a bath every week</li> <li>Use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters and vacuums</li> <li>If your child's asthma or allergy symptoms aren't getting better, you may need to think about having your pet live somewhere else</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Cockroaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't leave food and garbage out</li> <li>Put out bait traps or call a professional exterminator to get rid of cockroaches</li> </ul>

## Other Triggers

	<p><b>Exercise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give your child their quick relief medication (albuterol or levalbuterol) 15 minutes before they exercise</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Strong Emotions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laughing or crying can trigger an asthma attack</li> <li>Teach your child relaxation or calming methods like deep breathing (take a breath slowly through your nose and then blow out slowly through your mouth)</li> </ul>