

## For Kids: Asthma and Exercise



If you have asthma, you can enjoy sports if you know how to do them safely. Being active can even help your asthma. Besides being fun, exercise can make you a winner in many ways:

- It makes your lungs healthy, so your asthma bothers you less.
- It teaches you to stretch, reach, and move in new ways.
- It gives you more energy.

### Safety first

Your healthcare provider can tell you how to exercise safely. Here are some things to ask:

- Should I use my inhaler before I exercise?
- How long should I exercise each day?
- How will I know when to slow down or rest?
- Should I exercise when I have a cold?

With the help of your parents, talk to your physical education (P.E.) teacher and coaches about your asthma. Make sure they understand what asthma is, how it is treated, and how they may need to help you. Set up an “asthma signal” with him or her. Use the signal when you need to slow down or stop exercising. For example, you might simply wave to your teacher or coach.

### Weather watch

- In cold weather, breathe in through your nose, not your mouth. This warms up the air before it gets into your lungs. Try wearing a scarf to cover your nose and mouth.
- Exercise inside if the air outside is hot, polluted, or full of pollen.

- Drink water or juice before, during, and after exercise.
- Don't give up on exercise! If your asthma still flares up, ask your provider what you should do.

### **Before and after exercise**

Try to follow these asthma safety tips each time you exercise:

1. If you are supposed to, use your inhaler before exercise.
2. Warm up for 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Remember, you should be able to talk while you exercise or are active. Slow down or stop if you can't.
4. Cool down for at least 5 minutes. Before you finish, stretch or just slow down.

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