



Preparing for School with Asthma

If your child has asthma, it is important to start preparing for school early. In Illinois, all children with asthma who can self-medicate are allowed to carry and administer their quick-relief asthma inhaler while at school, regardless of age.

Start letting your child administer his or her quick-reliever at least six months prior to entering school. This lets you know if your child is correctly using the medication before school begins. *There will be mistakes* and it is best that these happen when you are there in order to make the needed corrections.

To make this transition easier for both of you, be sure to teach your child:

- how to recognize signs and symptoms of his/her asthma.
- how to use quick-reliever medicine with his/her spacer.
- how to use a peak flow meter.
- that it is important to always keep his/her medicine with them.
- what triggers his/her asthma so they can avoid the triggers at school.
- how to tell an adult when asthma symptoms start.

Ensure that your child's school has the necessary paperwork, including:

- any school-specific forms
- a signed note from you
- the prescription label off of your child's medication box

Note that as of August 2010, according to Public Act 096-1460, a doctor's note is no longer required for your child to carry and self-administer his/her quick-relief asthma inhaler.

Once your child is ready, it is important to make sure the school is ready for your child.

- Call or meet with the school nurse and your child's teacher to explain your child's asthma symptoms, triggers and medicines.
- Ensure the nurse and teacher have a written asthma action plan and know how to handle an asthma attack.
- Provide two prescriptions of each medication whenever possible, one to be carried by your child and one to be kept by the school as a backup.
- Provide the school with emergency contact information so you or someone else who knows about your child's asthma can be reached in an emergency.

Children with asthma have the right to be safe while at school. Contact the school and explain to them any accommodations your child needs.