WHAT IS ASTHMA?
Asthma is a chronic lung disease that makes it hard to breathe.

Why asthma makes it hard to breathe

Air enters the body from the nose and mouth and travels through the airways.

For people with asthma, the muscles of the airways tighten and thicken. The air passages become swollen and full of mucus, making it difficult for air to move.

For people without asthma, the muscles around the airways are relaxed, allowing air to flow easily.

Airways of a person with asthma

Airways of a person without asthma

ASTHMA CANNOT BE CURED, BUT IT CAN BE CONTROLLED

Most children can avoid asthma attacks with daily care

There are 2 types of asthma medicine: 1. Controller medicine: Daily medicines to reduce swelling 2. Quick-relief medicine: Emergency medicine to open up airways

Talk to your child’s doctor to see if they need medicine. Be sure to follow the doctor’s instructions for administering medicine, and avoid triggers that can make asthma symptoms worse.

Ask your child’s doctor

How serious is my child’s asthma?
Should my child take controller medicines to prevent asthma symptoms and attacks?
How can I find out what makes my child’s asthma worse?

What do I do if my child’s medication runs out and I have no refills?
How often should my child use the quick-relief medicine before consulting with a doctor?
What else can I do to help manage my child’s asthma?

Make sure your child’s teachers and caregivers know what to do

Tell family members, school nurses and anyone who cares for your child how to manage their asthma when you aren’t around and what to do in the event of an attack.

Ask your doctor to fill out an Asthma Medication Administration Form and give it to the school nurse at the beginning of every school year.

Visit nyc.gov/health/asthma to download the form.

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