



# ASTHMA

Asthma is a long-term lung condition that can be controlled but cannot be cured. Children with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs which react to triggers causing a flare up, also known as an asthma attack. Symptoms vary from child to child but typically include breathlessness, tight feeling in chest, wheezing or coughing. These symptoms usually occur at night, early in the morning or during/just after physical exertion.

If you have any concerns about your child and exercise please get in touch with an Accredited Exercise Physiologist who can develop a suitable exercise program.

For full information on the condition please contact Asthma Australia.

**Before exercising always check with an accredited exercise physiologist.**

## Why it's important to exercise

It is important for children with asthma to continue to participate in physical activity, as it can reduce symptoms by strengthening their heart and lungs. This can improve their breathing and reducing asthma attacks - enhancing their quality of life. It is important to understand the pattern of your child's asthma (including triggers and treatment approaches) for effective symptom management. It is important that children, parents, teachers, and coaches are educated about your child's asthma management plan. Every child is different and will have different experiences with their asthma so knowing the facts on physical activity is crucial.

## Things to remember:

Identification of triggers (such as grasses, pollens and pollution). By minimising exposure to triggers and having an appropriate asthma management plan, children with asthma are able to participate in physical activity with reduced risk of an attack. Before activity, your child should take reliever medication up to 15 minutes before warming up or as directed by their doctor. Always be sure that your child is warming up prior to exercise and cooling down after exercise. The type of exercise and the amount of time exercising that you expose your child to is important. Vigorous activity for six minutes or more in cold, dry air is more likely to trigger asthma. Ensure that your child has followed guidelines for taking their reliever medication if participating in early morning activity or if training/playing at night in winter months.

## Types of exercise recommended:

Many great and recommended exercises for kids with asthma are yoga, walking, biking, hiking, gymnastics, and swimming. When commencing a new activity, ensure that your child commences at a low level and gradually increases their level of movement as they feel comfortable. Performing new activities that are too vigorous for your child's level of fitness may cause a trigger of asthma symptoms. Know that over time as your child becomes fitter so do their lungs and asthma attacks will become less likely. Always have reliever medications available at all times when your child is exercising.

## References:

About Asthma. Asthma Australia. [www.asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au). Asthma and Young Children. Better Health Channel. [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au). Definition of Asthma, Exercise Educated. Medicine.net. [www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com). Can Kids and Teens With Asthma Play Sports? Kids Health. [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org)

Find your local accredited exercise physiologist at [www.exerciseright.com.au](http://www.exerciseright.com.au)

