

Why You Need to Take Control

Problems caused by asthma won't go away on their own. You need day-to-day control of the inflammation in your lungs. You also need to control symptoms when you have them. These are lifelong tasks. But the more you stay in control, the better you'll feel. If you don't stay in control:

- Asthma symptoms can affect your life. You may miss school, work, or activities that you enjoy.
- Asthma flare-ups can be dangerous, even deadly.
- Uncontrolled asthma may cause permanent damage to your lungs.

What Is an Asthma Action Plan?

Your healthcare team will help you design a personal action plan to control your asthma. It includes all the steps you need to care for yourself. This will help remind you how to manage your asthma so you can feel your best. The action plan tells you what to do when you are in each of the three asthma zones:

- **Green = good control.** You have no asthma symptoms. Peak flow is normal or near normal. With asthma in control, you are in the green zone all or most of the time. Don't stop your routine when you feel good. Controlling asthma is everyday work.
- **Yellow = caution.** Peak flow is lower or you have mild symptoms. A flare-up is beginning. Quick action may prevent or stop it. If you are often in the yellow zone, the treatment plan needs to be revised.
- **Red = stop.** Symptoms are moderate to severe and your peak flow is very low. This is a serious flare-up. Get medical attention now! Do not go alone to the hospital or the doctor's office.

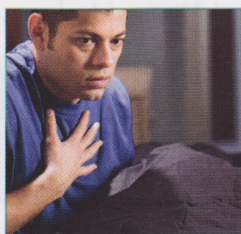
Two Questions to Ask Yourself

The questions at right can help you assess your symptoms and medication usage.

If you answer yes to either question, asthma is not well controlled. Talk to your healthcare team. If you're already following your action plan closely, you may need to adjust your medications.



- 1 Do you use your quick-relief inhaler more than **2 times a week** (other than before exercise)?



- 2 Do you wake up at night with symptoms more than **2 times a month**?