

# Managing Your Child's Asthma: What Parents Should Know

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If you have an asthma sufferer in your family, you know how imperative it is to keep this chronic condition under control. While asthma can affect individuals to varying degrees, it's important to understand that in most cases with proper and regular care, it is possible to live with well-controlled asthma.

More than 25 million Americans are living with asthma<sup>[1]</sup>, with six million of those patients being children.<sup>[2]</sup> Common symptoms of asthma include recurring periods of wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath, and coughing that often occurs at night or early in the morning.<sup>[3]</sup>

The American Lung Association recommends all those with asthma create an Asthma Action Plan with their physician in order to establish guidance when symptoms arise. This is particularly helpful to give to your child's school or caregiver so they are well equipped to address issues.<sup>[4]</sup> You can download their Asthma Action Plan for Home and School [here](#).

According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, avoiding or limiting contact with known allergens may help to prevent or decrease asthma attacks. The most common asthma triggers include:

- **Allergens** like dust mites, cockroaches, pollens, molds, pet dander, and rodents
- **Environmental irritants** like cigarette smoke, air pollution, wood and charcoal fires, strong fumes, vapors and odors, dust and particles in the air, and chemicals
- **Respiratory illnesses** like colds, the flu, sore throats, sinus infections, and pneumonia
- **Exercise**, especially in cold weather (This condition is called exercise-induced asthma.)
- **Changes in the weather**
- **Strong emotions** like anger, fear, laughing, or crying that can change breathing patterns
- **Certain medicines** like aspirin, NSAIDs, and beta blockers
- **Other triggers** like food allergies, sulfites in food, hormonal changes, and reflux<sup>[5]</sup>

While there is no cure for asthma, taking your prescribed medications and addressing your triggers may help to manage your condition. With two types of inhalers available, preventative (maintenance) and immediate rescue, your doctor will instruct you and your child on when to use each. It's imperative that each asthma sufferer utilizes the preventative (maintenance) inhaler as prescribed to help keep symptoms from coming on. These inhalers may work by reducing swelling and inflammation in the airways.

For kids, it can sometimes be hard to establish the correct hand-breath coordination needed for inhalation with most common preventative inhalers on the market. QVAR RediHaler® (beclomethasone dipropionate HFA), the first and only breath-actuated metered dose inhaled corticosteroid for the maintenance treatment of asthma in patients ages 4 and older, does not require hand-breath coordination and may be an option for children 4 and older. Because the medication delivery is breath-actuated, it should not be used with a spacer or volume holding chamber.

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#### APPROVED USE

QVAR RediHaler (beclomethasone dipropionate HFA) Inhalation Aerosol is a breath-actuated inhaled prescription medicine used as a maintenance treatment for the prevention and control of asthma in people 4 years of age and older.

QVAR RediHaler Inhalation Aerosol is not used to relieve sudden breathing problems and won't replace a rescue inhaler.

#### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

- Do not use QVAR RediHaler to treat sudden severe symptoms of asthma. Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden symptoms.
- Do not use QVAR RediHaler if you are allergic to beclomethasone dipropionate or any of the ingredients in QVAR RediHaler.
- Do not use QVAR RediHaler more often than prescribed.
- **Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take and about all of your health conditions.**

For a video demonstration of how QVAR RediHaler® is used, [click here](#).

Please see additional Important Safety Information at the end of this article and [full Prescribing Information](#).

[Please see full instructions for use.](#)

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## Lifestyle changes to support asthma treatment

The prevalence and use of lifestyle changes is common amongst asthma sufferers. According to the study *An Overview of Integrative Therapies in Asthma Treatment*, the following treatment approaches have shown to be of some benefit for asthma patients: nutrition modification, mind-body medicine, physical activity, and certain dietary supplement interventions.<sup>[6]</sup>

Talk to your doctor about incorporating these practices into your child's life.

- **Identify and address your triggers.**
  - **Indoor:** The [Chest Foundation](#) recommends you vacuum regularly with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air)-filtered vacuum, use dust-and-mite-proof mattress and pillow covers, wash bed linens weekly, and if possible, replace carpets with hardwood floors. For mold, they say to keep the humidity at less than 50% to control growth and to repair water leaks as they arise. For those with pets, wash and brush them weekly and keep them out of your asthma sufferer's bedroom.
  - **Outdoor:** Keep your child away from heavy smoke and pollution. Check your local pollen levels and keep them inside during peak hours. Utilize air conditioning when triggers are present.
- **Avoid harmful chemicals in your home.** [According to Dr. Alan Greene](#), "Chemicals that release fumes, called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), are in solvents, cleaning products, air fresheners, polishes, adhesives, paints, new carpeting, and furniture. Switch to natural cleaners with ["The Ultimate Guide to Cleaning Without Chemicals"](#).
- **Maintain a healthy diet and weight.** A Duke University study found that overweight children ages 2-5 had more frequent asthma episodes than their counterparts with a healthy weight.<sup>[7]</sup> Speak with your healthcare provider about how to best incorporate healthy, vitamin-and-mineral-rich foods into your child's diet.



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  - **Vitamin D:** A 2016 study showed that vitamin D, which has antibacterial, antiviral, and anti-inflammatory properties, may be able to lower the risk of asthma attacks in those with mild or moderate asthma who originally had low vitamin D levels.<sup>[8]</sup>
  - **Antioxidants:** A study from the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* showed that kids with higher levels of important antioxidants were less likely to develop asthma. Some of these antioxidants include vitamin C, beta carotene, and selenium.<sup>[9]</sup>
- **Incorporate stress relief practices.** For those who are triggered by stress and anxiety, practicing yoga, breathing exercises, and additional coping mechanisms can help manage stress triggers in a healthy way.

This content is not intended to substitute for professional medical advice or treatment. Speak with your physician before starting any new treatments or therapies.

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#### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

**QVAR RediHaler may cause serious side effects, including:**

- **Fungal infections (thrush) in your mouth and throat.** Rinse your mouth with water **without swallowing** after using QVAR RediHaler to help prevent an infection in your mouth or throat.
- **Worsening asthma or sudden asthma attacks.** After using your rescue inhaler, contact your healthcare provider right away if you do not get relief from your sudden asthma attacks.
- **Reduced adrenal function (adrenal insufficiency).** This potentially life-threatening condition can happen when you stop taking oral corticosteroid medicines and start using inhaled corticosteroid medicines (such as QVAR RediHaler). Tell your healthcare provider right away about any signs and symptoms of adrenal insufficiency such as: feeling tired or exhausted (fatigue); lack of energy; low blood pressure (hypotension); dizziness or feeling faint; nausea and vomiting; or weakness.
- **Immune system effects and a higher chance for infections.** Tell your healthcare provider about any signs or symptoms of infection such as: fever, chills, pain, feeling tired, body aches, nausea, or vomiting.
- **Increased wheezing (bronchospasm) right after using QVAR RediHaler.** Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden wheezing.
- **Serious allergic reactions.** Stop using QVAR RediHaler and call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical help right away if you get any of the following: hives; swelling of your lips, tongue, or face; rash; or breathing problems.
- **Slowed growth in children.** Children should have their growth checked regularly while using QVAR RediHaler.
- **Lower bone density.** This may be a problem for people who already have a higher chance for low bone density (osteoporosis).
- **Eye problems.** If you have had glaucoma, cataracts or blurred vision in the past, you should have regular eye exams while using QVAR RediHaler.
- **Common side effects of QVAR RediHaler include:** yeast infection in the mouth (oral candidiasis); cold symptoms (upper respiratory tract infection); pain in the throat (oropharyngeal pain); pain or swelling in your nose and throat (nasopharyngitis); sinus irritation (sinusitis); and hay fever (allergic rhinitis)

These are not all the possible side effects of QVAR RediHaler. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see [full Prescribing Information](#).

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit <http://www.fda.gov/medwatch>, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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