



Asthma

Health support pack

This pack has been created by a team of children's health and wellbeing specialists from Evelina London, King's College Hospital and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. Our aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people with asthma in Lambeth and Southwark.

This booklet is correct at the time of publishing. It will be subject to review and updates. This resource is not a substitute for advice from your child's health professional but an additional resource to improve the health and wellbeing of your child.

For comments or feedback on this pack please email gst-tr.cyp@nhs.net.

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Your child's asthma triggers

See pages 6 – 11 for common and important asthma triggers.

The 4 simple steps

Check out our 4 simple steps on page 19. They could save your child's life, so make sure you know them.

Having asthma can affect your child's emotions and behaviour

See page 20 for suggestions on managing issues that might affect your child's wellbeing, and page 23 for ideas about looking after yourself as a parent or carer.

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What is asthma?

Asthma affects the lungs. The breathing tubes in the lungs can become narrow and inflamed (swollen) and this makes it harder to breathe, and harder for oxygen to get into the blood.

There are about 3 children in each school class with asthma in the UK. Although it is a common condition, it can be serious. Unfortunately, on average, 20 children die from asthma every year. Most children who die from asthma could have been saved with better prevention and care.

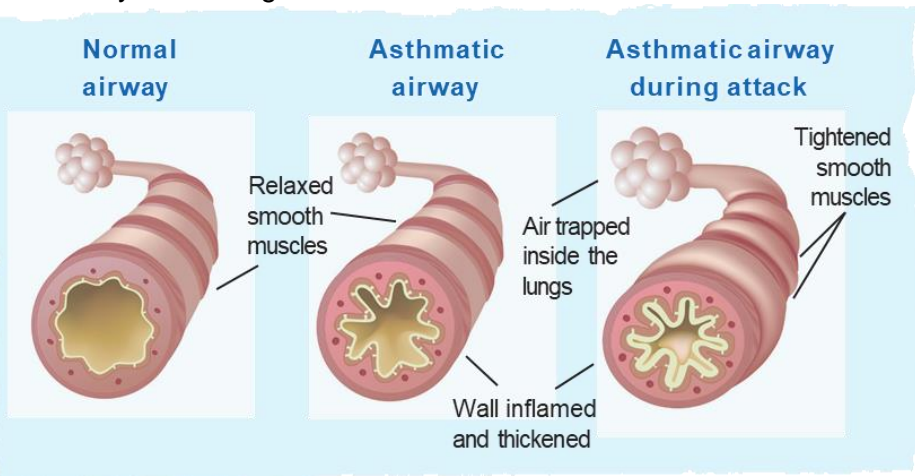
Children with asthma have a better chance of living a happy, healthy life if they follow expert advice to look after their asthma.

Children with asthma always have slightly inflamed airways, and when they come into contact with something known as an '**asthma trigger**', the airways of the lungs can react in the following ways:

- the muscles surrounding the airways (smooth muscles) tighten and squeeze
- the lining starts to swell
- thick mucus (sticky liquid) builds up inside the airways.

This is shown in the diagram below. Further information on common asthma triggers are on pages 6 - 11.

We manage asthma by giving medicine to reduce the inflammation and sensitivity of the lungs.



Children with asthma might have:

- **a tight chest** because the muscles are working harder to move air in and out of the lungs. Children might say their "chest hurts" or that "something is sitting on my chest" or "my tummy hurts" (children can find it difficult to describe exactly where the pain is).
- **a dry cough** any time of the day or night
- **difficulty taking in a full breath**
- **wheezing** (hoarse whistling noise). If the breathing tubes are swollen, the insides are narrower (smaller), and the air will have to squeeze through. This makes the wheeze noise.
- **reduced exercise tolerance** (be able to exercise less)
- **fast breathing, breathlessness or respiratory distress**

Other conditions linked to asthma

Hayfever (allergic rhinitis), eczema, and allergies (such as food allergies) and asthma are all called atopic. This means they have features in common, and the conditions often occur together.



It is also common for more than 1 person in a family to have these conditions. Reducing exposure to allergic triggers and using medicine to improve these atopic conditions will also improve asthma.









Common and important triggers



'Triggers' are the things that make your child's asthma worse and are different for each child.


The table below describes common triggers and tips on managing them.






Indoor triggers	Useful information to help your child
<p>Cleaning products</p> 	<p>Some cleaning products contain strong smells, chemicals and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) which can worsen asthma. Tips for cleaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● avoid spray cleaners ● use liquid or gel cleaners which are unscented ● keep windows and doors open when cleaning so the room is well ventilated ● damp dusting regularly with a cloth will trap dust
<p>Dust and dust mites</p> 	<p>House dust mites like warm places, and are found in bedding, pillowcases, mattresses and other soft furniture and soft toys.</p> <p>It's impossible to clear all dust mites from your home, but it can help if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● vacuum regularly ● dust with a damp cloth ● limit soft toys on the bed to 1 at night time and try not to let your child sleep with it next to their face. You can try putting soft toys in the freezer (dust mites hate to be frozen) and washing them regularly ● wash bedding at 60°C ● consider choosing laminate or hard flooring instead of carpets ● if your child is in a bunk bed, let them sleep on the top bunk if it is safe. Lying on the bottom bunk can mean that dust from the top bunk falls onto the child when they are sleeping. <p>We do not recommend buying anti-allergy bedding or special vacuum cleaners. They are expensive and there is no evidence that they work.</p>

Indoor triggers	Useful information to help your child
<p>Medicines</p> 	<p>Certain medicines, such as ibuprofen, are a trigger for some children. This is rare and most children are fine. If you are using medicines for the first time, you should speak to your local pharmacist to check if this might affect your child's asthma.</p>
<p>Mould and damp</p> 	<p>Mould and damp can make asthma worse. Allow air to move around home as much as you can. Open windows if possible.</p> <p>When you use chemicals to clean off mould, do this when your child is out of the house and only let them back in when the fumes have gone.</p> <p>If you are concerned about damp, please contact your landlord, housing association or local council. The NHS website has more information about How to get rid of damp and mould</p>
<p>Pests</p> 	<p>Examples of pests include mice, cockroaches, etc. To reduce the likelihood of having pests in your home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● keep your home clean and uncluttered ● avoid dropping crumbs ● seal all holes and gaps in walls
<p>Pets</p> 	<p>Dander (dead skin cells), saliva (spit) and pee (urine) from furry pets can be a trigger. It's best for your child's asthma that animals are not allowed into your child's bedroom.</p> <p>Wash hands after touching animals.</p> <p>If your child is going to a house with animals, make sure they have their salbutamol and spacer with them and check their asthma action plan.</p> <p>Removing the animal from the home might improve symptoms.</p>

Indoor triggers	Useful information to help your child
<p>Smoking</p> 	<p>If your child is around a family member who smokes (inside or outdoors) their asthma is going to be a lot harder to manage, even if they're following their asthma action plan and are taking all of their medicines as prescribed.</p> <p>Smoking outside and removing your jacket when inside again does not remove the effect of passive smoking as the particles linger on hair, skin, clothes and breath.</p> <p>Smoking and passive smoking can undo the effects of any long-term preventer inhaler your child is using. It can result in your child needing to use their reliever inhaler more often. It can also disturb their sleep, because they cough more at night.</p> <p>Remember it is against the law to smoke in a car with anyone under the age of 18 years old. Stopping smoking is one of the most important things you can do to improve your child's breathing. It is difficult to stop smoking by yourself. See our advice on stopping smoking at the start of page 24.</p>
<p>Strong smells & fumes</p> 	<p>Paints, perfumes, air fresheners and nail varnish can irritate the nose and lungs.</p> <p>Try to avoid places with strong smells as much as possible, and use scent-free products in the home.</p>

Outdoor triggers	Useful information to help your child
<p>Pollen</p> 	<p>Pollen can be a trigger, especially in high-pollen season (spring/summer). Some children may have symptoms all year round.</p> <p>Change your child's clothes when they come home after being outside.</p> <p>Bathe your child and wash their hair before they go to bed.</p> <p>Your child should wear sunglasses.</p> <p>Your child should avoid playing in freshly-cut grass.</p> <p>Dry laundry inside.</p> <p>Avoid opening windows during high-pollen season.</p>
<p>Temperature changes</p> 	<p>Heat, humidity and cold weather can be triggers.</p> <p>Keep your child warm when it's cold. Your child should cover their mouth with a scarf when out in cold weather.</p> <p>A change in the weather when you go on holiday abroad might trigger your child's asthma.</p>

Other triggers	Useful information to help your child
<p>Air pollution</p> 	<p>Air quality is worse where there is lots of traffic.</p> <p>Avoid walking or cycling on busy roads if it is safe to take an alternative route. Use the clean air route finder to show low pollution walking options.</p> <p>You are likely to be exposed to higher levels of air pollution inside a vehicle than if you walk, scoot or cycle.</p> <p>If you have to drive, switch off the engine when stationary.</p> <p>Make sure your child walks on the inside of the pavement where pollution levels are lower. Even a short distance away from the source of pollution will make a difference.</p> <p>If you live near a busy road, try to open your windows for ventilation when traffic is lightest.</p> <p>Sign up to air pollution alerts from airTEXT so that you can take precautions on days that are particularly bad.</p> <p>Visit the Clean Air Hub for more information and tips around air pollution and how to protect your family.</p> <p>Some of the fuels, methods and tools used by households for cooking and heating may increase air pollution. In particular, activities like cooking (frying and roasting), cleaning, and burning fires, candles and incense.</p> <p>Ensure boilers, cookers and heaters are serviced regularly to reduce the risk of air pollution. Try opening windows and/or using extractor fans especially in kitchens and bathrooms.</p>

Other triggers	Useful information to help your child
<p>Colds and/or viruses</p> 	<p>Colds and/or viruses are very common triggers. As soon as your child has symptoms, check their asthma action plan.</p> <p>If your child is offered the flu vaccine, it is a good idea to have it as flu can lead to serious illness. For more information, speak to your practice nurse or local vaccination programme.</p>
<p>Emotions</p> 	<p>Sometimes strong emotions can be a trigger, especially if your child's asthma is poorly controlled. These emotions could be happy like laughter or feelings of sadness/stress.</p> <p>You can find some helpful ideas on dealing with difficult emotions on page 22.</p>
<p>Exercise</p> 	<p>Your child should be able to participate in sports and PE like other children. If they cannot exercise, walk upstairs and walk to school (among other physical activities) without having asthma symptoms, speak to a health professional.</p> <p>If your child is participating in exercise or other activities make sure they have access to their Salbutamol (reliever inhaler) and follow their personalised asthma action plan.</p>
<p>Food allergies</p> 	<p>If your child has a food allergy, they could have an allergic reaction if they eat that food. An allergic reaction can also cause an asthma attack. It is best to avoid the foods your child is allergic to so they do not have allergy or asthma attacks. Your child's allergy team can also support this.</p> <p>If you are concerned your child has a food allergy, please speak to your GP.</p>
<p>Wood-burning stoves / open fires</p> 	<p>Smoke from burning causes air pollution and can make asthma worse.</p> <p>If you need to burn solid fuel for heating, make sure you only use 'ready to burn' wood and logs.</p> <p>Never burn treated wood or household rubbish.</p>

Identifying triggers that make your child's asthma worse

Triggers are different for each child. It is important to work out what triggers matter to your child.

Identifying your child's asthma triggers

Here are some ideas that will help you identify your child's triggers. If possible, you and your child should look at this section together to help identify triggers.

Every time your child's asthma gets worse:

- Make a note of what is around your child, and what they are doing when their asthma is worse. The 'trigger tracker' on the next page may help with this.
- Fill out the tracker with your child.
- Try and do this for at least 7 days to see what possible triggers your child might have been close to or what they did differently.
- Over time, you will be able to spot patterns and identify the triggers that matter to your child.



Top tips

















Remember to be patient as spotting triggers can take time. It might be useful to set daily reminders on your phone, or use a diary so you and your child remember to keep a record.

Try and work on the things you can do every day. It will get easier with time, and you should find you are doing them without even having to think about it.

Make a note of the time and dose of your child's medicine.

Asthma trigger tracker

What was around your child, or what were they doing, when their asthma got worse? Please tick (✓) those that apply

Indoor triggers				
Cleaning products  <input type="checkbox"/>	Dust and dust mites  <input type="checkbox"/>	Medicines  <input type="checkbox"/>	Mould and damp  <input type="checkbox"/>	Pests  <input type="checkbox"/>
Pets  <input type="checkbox"/>	Smoking  <input type="checkbox"/>	Strong smells & fumes  <input type="checkbox"/>		
Outdoor triggers				
Pollen  <input type="checkbox"/>	Temperature changes  <input type="checkbox"/>			
Other triggers				
Air pollution  <input type="checkbox"/>	Colds and/or viruses  <input type="checkbox"/>	Emotions  <input type="checkbox"/>	Exercise  <input type="checkbox"/>	Food allergies  <input type="checkbox"/>
Wood-burning stoves/ open fires  <input type="checkbox"/>				

Other

Avoiding asthma triggers

Now that you and your child have identified some asthma triggers, your child will need to stay away from these triggers as much as they can. Not all triggers can be avoided, but by making some small changes, it might be possible to avoid a lot of them.

You can use the table below to remember your child's triggers and create plans to avoid them. Write down your child's triggers that you have identified. Then, write down some reasons why it is hard to avoid these triggers. Finally, write some ideas for what you can do. The first two rows are examples.

Asthma trigger avoidance plan

Trigger	Reason it's hard to avoid these triggers	Ideas of what you can do
<i>Cats</i>	<i>We own a cat</i>	<i>Keep the cat out of my child's bedroom. Consider rehoming the cat.</i>
<i>Playing football</i>	<i>My child enjoys football</i>	<i>Follow my child's personalised asthma action plan to take medicine before exercising or during a game</i>

How to manage your child's asthma

Children with asthma have a better chance of living a happy, healthy life if they follow expert advice to look after their asthma.

Staying well - asthma action plan

It is really important for your child to have an asthma action plan. An asthma action plan explains how to recognise asthma symptoms that are getting worse, and what to do. The plan should be provided and fully explained to you and your child by your GP or practice nurse, at least every year at your child's asthma annual (yearly) review.

An effective plan should allow your child to:


- ✓ be active
- ✓ sleep all night
- ✓ have fewer symptoms
- ✓ attend school regularly
- ✓ stay out of hospital

Always remember that if your child needs more than 10 puffs of Salbutamol every 4 hours, they need to be seen quickly by a doctor or nurse.


Here is what an asthma action plan may look like. Ask your practice nurse or GP to complete it with you.

When your child has a completed asthma action plan:


- Take a photograph of it and keep it on your phone. That way you always have the information with you.
- Put the plan somewhere everyone can see it, such as on the fridge door.
- Send the plan to anyone that looks after your child so they will know what to do if your child becomes unwell with asthma.
- Give a copy to your child's school.



My Asthma Plan



Your asthma plan tells you when to take your asthma medicines.



Ask what to do when your asthma gets worse.

Name: _____

1 My daily asthma medicines

My preventer inhaler is called _____
or I use the colour _____

I take _____ puffs of my preventer inhaler in the morning/_____ puffs of my preventer inhaler in the evening/_____ puffs of my preventer inhaler every day when I feel bad.

Other asthma medicines I take every day _____

My reliever inhaler is called _____
or it is the colour _____

I take _____ puffs of my reliever inhaler when I cough, feel short of breath, or cough, my chest hurts or it's hard to breathe.

My best peak flow is _____

2 When my asthma gets worse

I'll know my asthma is getting worse if:

I wheeze or cough, my chest hurts or it's hard to breathe, or I'm waking up at night because of my asthma, or I'm taking my reliever inhaler more than _____ times each week, or my peak flow is less than _____

If my asthma gets worse, I should:


Keep taking my preventer medicines as normal.

And also take _____ puffs of my blue reliever inhaler every four hours.


Remember, my reliever inhaler should only be used if my doctor or asthma nurse tells me to.

Does doing sport make it hard to breathe?

IF YES take _____ puffs of my reliever inhaler (blue) before and after.



Remember to use my inhaler with a spacer (if I have one)



Asthma medication

We manage asthma by giving medicine to reduce the inflammation and sensitivity of the lungs.

It is important to check your child's medicines are in date and their reliever is kept near them at all times.

For more information about the medicines your child is on, speak to your local pharmacist or take a look at www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk

Inhaler technique

1. Always shake your inhaler before use.
2. Place the mask over your child's nose or mouth, or put the mouthpiece into their mouth with a good seal.
3. Your child takes at least 5 steady breaths in and out (tidal breathing).
4. Go back to step 1 if your child needs a second puff.



If you are unsure how to use your child's inhaler, you can watch videos online. We recommend [Asthma UK website](#) and [Rightbreathe](#).

Ask your local pharmacist to check your child's inhaler technique regularly to make sure it is working for your child.

Children over 5 years old are expected to use a spacer without a mask.



Some inhalers can impact the environment, but you should use the device that works best for you, and focus on taking your preventer medicines. Good asthma control will reduce environmental impact. You can discuss this with your doctor or asthma nurse. To recycle your old inhalers, you can take them to your local pharmacy.

Preventer medicines

All children with asthma should take a preventer medicine. The preventer (usually brown, orange or purple inhalers, or tablets) works to reduce inflammation (swelling) and keep your child's airways open to reduce the chance of getting asthma symptoms.

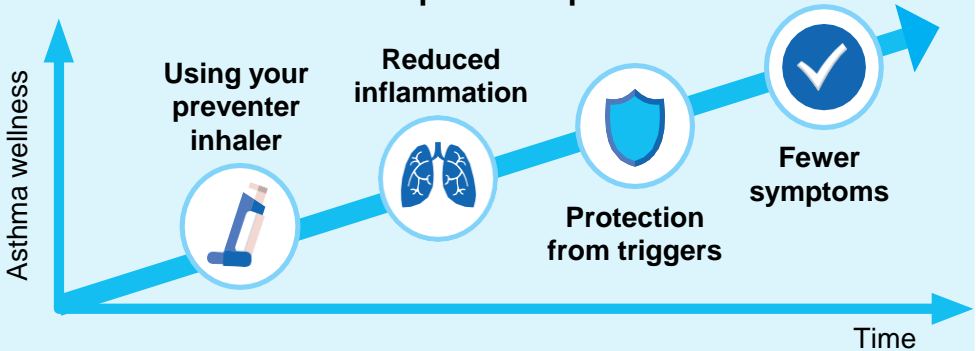
All preventers take time to work properly and it is important to **take them every day, as prescribed, even when your child is well to prevent asthma symptoms**. Generally it takes a few weeks to see an improvement.

The most common preventer medicines are:

- Montelukast (either granules, chewable tablets or tablets)
- steroid inhaler
- combination inhaler, with a steroid in it and a long-acting version of Salbutamol

Most children who take these types of medicines correctly will be able to control their asthma and should have very few asthma attacks.

Preventer inhalers build up asthma protection over time

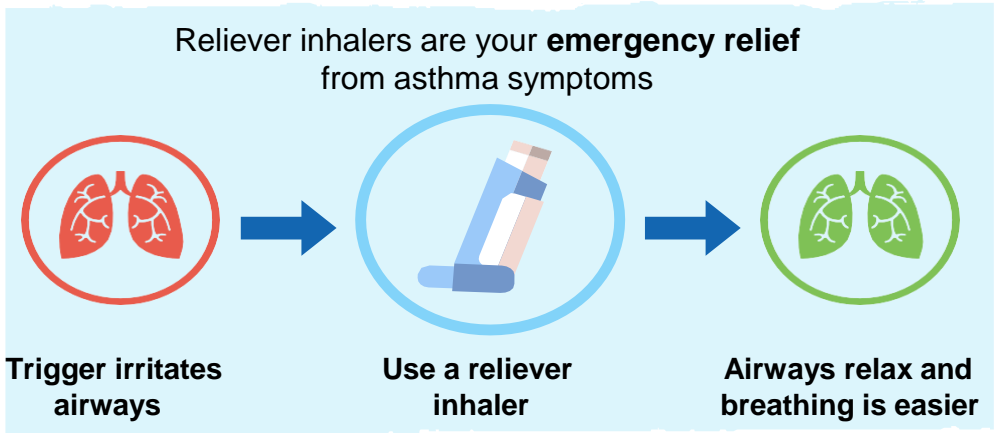


Ways to remember to use the preventer every day

- Set an alarm on your phone.
- Keep the medicine somewhere you'll see it every day as a reminder.
- Keep your preventer inhaler by your toothbrush. (You brush your teeth twice a day, so why not take your inhaler at the same time?)
- Stick a post-it note on your mirror to remind you.
- Set a reward for your child taking their medicine every day for a week.

Reliever inhalers

Everyone with asthma should have a reliever inhaler, and carry one with them everywhere they go.



The reliever (blue inhaler) opens your child's airways quickly, but **does not** reduce the chance of an asthma attack in the future, or reduce the risk of your child getting asthma symptoms.

If your child is coughing, feeling wheezy, short of breath, or their chest feels tight, using this medicine should make them feel much better in 1 to 2 minutes.

You should take your child to the GP for a review if they:

- have asthma symptoms or take their reliever inhaler 3 or more days each week
- have asthma symptoms or take their reliever inhaler 1 or more nights each week
- have asthma symptoms most weeks



If your child has an asthma attack

How to know if your child is having an asthma attack

- Their reliever inhaler isn't helping, or the effect is not lasting 4 hours.
- They can't talk or walk easily.
- They are breathing harder and faster.
- They might be coughing or wheezing.
- They might complain of pain in their tummy or chest.

Information on how to manage your child during an asthma attack should be on their asthma action plan.

After an asthma attack:

- if you have dealt with asthma attack at home, see your GP today
- if your child was treated in hospital, see your GP within 48 hours of being discharged to make sure the attack is over
- finish any medicines they prescribed your child, even if they start to feel better
- if your child does not improve after treatment, see your GP urgently

The 4 simple steps to take in an emergency

These steps could save your child's life, so make sure you know them and share them with other people who look after your child.

- 1 Help your child to sit up straight and stay calm.
- 2 Help them take a puff of their reliever inhaler (usually blue) every 30 to 60 seconds, up to a maximum of 10 puffs. Remember to shake between puffs.
- 3 Call 999 for an ambulance if:
 - your child's symptoms get worse while they're using their inhaler.
 - your child doesn't feel better after 10 puffs
 - you're worried at any time.
- 4 While you wait for the ambulance, reassure your child. Repeat step 2 if the ambulance takes longer than 15 minutes.

Never be afraid to call 999 if you think your child is having an asthma attack.

General wellbeing and asthma

Having asthma can affect your child's emotions and behaviour.

Understanding asthma takes time and can be tricky for children.

Asthma can be unpredictable and impact on lifestyle and relationships with family and friends.

Below are some common issues and some thoughts about how to manage them.

Going to school

Asthma should not stop your child doing well at school. It might make it harder for them to go to school and might result in them getting behind with school work.

- Try talking to your child about any difficulties in school and what makes it harder for them to be in school. You may be surprised to discover that the things that worry them about school are not the things you thought would worry them.
- Speak to the school about your child's worries to find ways to help.

Managing bullying

Many children get teased or bullied, which can be very stressful. They might become quieter, withdrawn or struggle to go to school.

If this happens, you might help by encouraging your child to tell you what is happening and how they are feeling. Ask them, be patient and let them talk when they're ready. Listen, and be supportive.

Parents and schools should always think about how the child feels, when addressing issues with teasing or bullying.

Schools are usually experienced in helping, and should have anti-bullying policies. Talk with your child's school about what's happening, and what's being done to help.

Problems sleeping

Lack of good-quality sleep can affect a child's mood and behaviour, and can make it more difficult to concentrate.

- It is helpful to set a regular bedtime. Your child should not watch TV or play with phones or other electronic devices for at least an hour before bedtime.
- Think about helping your child with a 'winding down' routine before bed, doing activities that are calming and relaxing.

For more information, you can visit the [Sleep Council](#) site or the NHS guidance on [Healthy sleep tips for children](#).

Self-confidence

Having asthma, particularly if symptoms are difficult to manage, can affect your child's self-confidence.

- Encourage them to develop a positive attitude about themselves, despite their health issues.
- Help them focus on their achievements.
- Support their interaction with their friends/peers.

Behavioural issues

Symptoms of asthma (and the need to follow a treatment plan) can be very frustrating for your child. They might affect your child's behaviour, sometimes leading to conflict and arguments in the family.

Sticking to boundaries might be more difficult when your child's symptoms are more problematic.

- Be clear with your child about what you expect of them when they are ill, and when they are well.
- Recognise and reward positive behaviours.
- Encourage your child to talk about their frustrations.

Feeling stressed

Children can feel stressed for different reasons, such as having tests or exams or if they are experiencing changes in family life (such as moving house, changing school, having a new teacher). Stress often has an impact on children's health and can make their asthma worse.

- Be familiar with your child's school routine and ask about changes. Your child might not talk to you about them or realise the impact on their health. Make sure you also discuss your child's worries with their school so you can be kept informed of relevant changes.
- Keep your child involved in family plans, as appropriate for their age. Parents and carers sometimes don't realise that children know about changes in the family, or that they might worry about them.

Worrying and feeling down

Children may feel anxious or down about everyday things, like their own health needs, or that something might happen to them. It can be hard for parents or carers to start a conversation about these feelings, but it's important to do it, so here are some tips:

- Start talking with your child, so that they can get the help they need. Let them know that it is normal to feel upset sometimes.
- Don't worry about making things worse by asking them about it. It won't!
- Trying to talk things through once is often not enough to understand their issues. You may have to try several times and in different ways. It might also be helpful to discuss your concerns with school or close family members to see if they share them.

Useful websites

[MindEd for Families](#) is a free learning resource about the mental health of children, young people and older adults.

[Family lives](#) provides support to families, including in crisis situations [Childline](#) or **phone** 0800 1111 to speak to a counsellor.

[Kooth](#) online counselling for children and young people aged 11 - 25

[YoungMinds](#) for urgent help **text** YM to 85258, or **phone** 0808 802 5544 for a parent helpline.

[Anna Freud](#) provides resources for children, young people and parents

[Good Thinking](#) provides digital mental wellbeing for Londoners

[List of other websites](#) that provide mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people

Looking after yourself as a parent or carer

Looking after a child with asthma can be tiring, overwhelming and frustrating. While it might be hard to think about your own needs, it is important to look after yourself as this will help both you and your child.

Think about your own support

- Try talking more with another trusted adult about the worries and challenges of looking after your child's asthma. This could be a family member or a close friend. The important point is that they are able to make the time to listen to you, and that they do so without judgement or criticism.
- If you have a partner, or if you share the care of your child with another adult (such as a family member), it is useful that you have the chance to talk to each other about how you each feel things are going.

Look after your own health

- Healthy eating, sufficient sleep and regular exercise are important factors in maintaining your own good health.
- Whenever practically possible, it is important that you take a bit of time for yourself to rest and do things you enjoy or help you relax. This will help 'recharge your batteries'.

Meet other parents/carers

Meeting with other parents and carers whose children also have asthma is a chance to share some of the challenges and successes, and can be another source of support.

On the [Asthma UK website](#) you will find useful information about available support for parents of children with asthma, including how to join the parents' forum and the Facebook page.

Looking after your emotional wellbeing

Some parents and carers turn to smoking, drinking or using drugs because they are feeling stressed or upset about their child's health. Others develop mental health problems, like anxiety or depression.

Addressing these issues quickly is really important. Even if you feel that this takes time away from your role as a parent or carer, it will benefit your family's welfare and happiness in the long term.

Support is available in Lambeth and Southwark (see links below) if you are concerned about your own wellbeing.

[Southwark Wellbeing](#)

[Hub Lambeth living well network](#)

Good advice and support to stop smoking is available on the [NHS website](#)

Talking therapies services for adults are also available in both boroughs. Parents and carers can refer themselves if they are concerned about having mental health issues.

[Talking therapies services for adults in Lambeth](#)

[Talking therapies services for adults in Southwark](#)

For parents and carers who already have experience of mental health problems, a range of courses supporting the personal journey towards recovery are available through the South London and Maudsley (SLaM)

[Recovery College](#)



Looking after your family

A range of personal and social circumstances can have an impact on the health and wellbeing of children with health needs. Below is a list of community resources that are available to help with issues you and your family might be facing.

Early Help

If you are having difficulties and need support, you can self-refer to **Early Help**. They provide support to children, young people and families at times of need, to resolve issues rapidly and effectively before the problem gets worse.

Lambeth

[Early Help services in Lambeth](#)

Phone 020 7926 3100, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Phone 020 7926 5555, Monday to Friday, 5pm to 9am, weekends and public holidays)

Email helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk

Southwark

[Family Early Help services in Southwark](#) **phone** duty manager 020 7525 1922

Arranging childcare

Information on childcare support and different providers, as well as Children's Centres, is available directly through the council's website.

[Arranging childcare in Lambeth](#)

[Arranging childcare in Southwark](#)

Other essentials

[PACT Baby Bank](#) (Southwark) provides support with practical items, including baby clothing, cots, buggies, blankets, **phone** 020 7708 5465.

Healthy eating

The [HENRY Healthy Families programme](#) provides support to parents of young children, for example improved nutrition, parenting skills, breastfeeding and getting more active.

To access group programmes [email HENRY@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:HENRY@gstt.nhs.uk) with your name (or the name of the parent being referred), the child's age, a contact number, email address and postcode.

The [Food Flagship](#) programme in Lambeth is useful to help Lambeth residents develop a love of healthy and sustainable food. Information about healthy eating is also available on the [Southwark Council](#) website

Having enough food for your family

Sometimes, professionals seeing your child or working with your family can refer you to food banks in Lambeth and Southwark through a voucher scheme. This can depend on your circumstances, such as the age of your children.

[Lambeth Food Flagship](#)

[Southwark Foodbank](#)

Other options include:

[Lambeth Larder](#) – emergency food, help and advice

[Albrighton Community Fridge](#)

[Healthy Start](#) provide free fruit and vegetables, and items such as milk and vitamins.

[Alexandra Rose](#) provide vouchers for fruit and vegetables via children's centres to people eligible for the Healthy Start voucher scheme.

Heating your home

The [Seasonal Health Intervention Network Initiative \(SHINE\)](#), is EU-backed, led by Islington Council and is delivered in Lambeth. Referrals are made by NHS and social care staff and other professionals.

Some of the interventions include:

- advice on saving energy and grants that are available for heating and insulation.
- support with bills and energy debt.
- benefit checks by the Welfare Rights Team.
- fire safety checks (from London Fire Brigade).
- home security checks (from the police).

The [Southwark Council](#) website also has advice on saving energy in your home. More general advice on energy saving can be found here: [Energy Saving Trust](#)

Housing issues

The Southwark and Lambeth Council websites provide a range of information about housing.

[Lambeth housing advice](#)

[Southwark Together UK housing advice](#)

[Shelter](#) provide advice and support, and legal services, for poor housing and homelessness. [Emergency helpline](#) 0808 800 4444.

Difficulties with paying bills

Free and impartial advice about improving your finances is available at [Money Helper](#). It has been set up by the Government to help prevent debt and provides advice on financial options if you are in debt.

Support through a range of difficult financial situations is available through these Council websites:

[Lambeth support services](#)

[Southwark support services](#)

Other sources of support

[Citizens Advice](#). Advice on benefits, money, housing and more, **phone** 0800 144 8848

[Every Pound Counts](#). Benefits advice in Lambeth, **phone** 0800 254 0298

[National Debtline](#). Debt advice and support, **phone** 0808 808 4000

[Step Change Debt Charity](#). Free debt advice, **phone** 0800 138 1111

[UK Bill Help](#)

Finding employment

There is a Lambeth Council initiative called [Lambeth Working](#) that seeks to support local access to employment and opportunities, working with employers in the borough:

[Lambeth Working Initiative](#)

[Lambeth Children's Centres](#) also offer support for parents in acquiring skills and finding employment.

Advice on finding employment is also available from [Southwark Council Employment Advice](#)

[Southwark Works](#) provides employment support, including access to training and help with CV writing, filling in job applications and interview techniques.

Join in, and thrive in your community

[The Mix](#)

Free life advice, including money, housing, health and relationships, for those under 25, **phone** 0808 808 4994

Home Start

Support and friendship for families from 3rd trimester of pregnancy to 5 years old.

[Home Start Lambeth](#), **phone** 020 7924 9299

[Home Start Southwark](#), **phone** 020 7737 7720

Children's centres

Services include family support, support to get back to work, courses, stay and play, and child development information.

[Southwark](#)

[Lambeth](#)

Local offer

For parents and young people, aged up to 25 years, with special education needs. Information about education, health, transport, leisure, housing, and wellbeing.

[Southwark](#)

[Lambeth](#)

Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP)

Support and resources for families with babies and infants (aged up to 3), who live in the Coldharbour, Stockwell, Tulse Hill and Vassall wards of Lambeth.

[LEAP](#)

Refer a friend in need

If you have found this information useful and know someone else who could benefit, please refer them to [our website](#) where they can receive their free Health check and Health support pack.

Other health support packs are also available for constipation, eczema and family health and wellbeing.

Bridging gaps to help children and young people be healthy, happy, and well.