

# Make the most of your asthma review



**Get the support  
and advice you  
want so you can  
live life with as  
few symptoms  
as possible**

An asthma review is a yearly appointment with your GP or asthma nurse. It's your chance to talk about your asthma and any ways you can manage your symptoms better – people with severe asthma and children may have one more often.

### **Feel better**

Some people put up with symptoms like coughing and wheezing, which stop them doing the things they enjoy. At your review, you can discover how small tweaks can make a big difference and help you get the most out of life. →

### **Any asthma questions?**

Call our friendly expert nurses

**0300 222 5800**

(9am – 5pm; Mon – Fri)

[www.asthma.org.uk](http://www.asthma.org.uk)

asthma  
UK



## Your asthma review – what you'll gain

If you're free of symptoms, your review helps you stay that way. It's important to keep managing your asthma well as it can change over time – for example, due to stress. And if you sometimes have symptoms, a review can help you deal with them. Keeping on top of your asthma allows you to get on with doing all the things you want to do. A review can help you and your loved ones feel confident you're managing your asthma well.

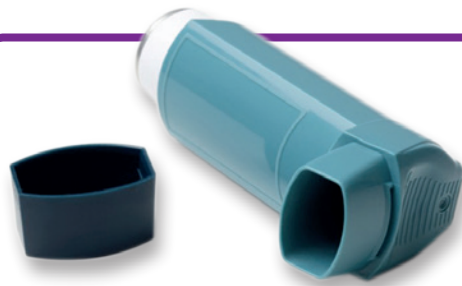
### Why should I go?

- You can get your medicine adjusted to your needs and check you're getting the full benefits from it
- You can have tests to find out how well you really are, even if you don't think you have symptoms
- You'll kick yourself if you don't go and then end up struggling with symptoms, or even having an asthma attack.

“Going for my annual asthma review helps me feel more confident about managing my asthma”

Kevin MacNeil, via Facebook

For more tips on managing asthma, why not join our friendly Facebook community? You can find us at [www.facebook.com/AsthmaUK](http://www.facebook.com/AsthmaUK)



### What to expect on the day

Your GP or asthma nurse should:

- 1 **Ask you about your asthma symptoms. For example, are they:**
  - Disturbing your sleep
  - Affecting your normal daily activities
  - Making you use your reliever inhaler more than three times a week
- 2 **Check your inhalers and that you're on the right treatment and dose.** They may even reduce or up the amount of medicine you take.
- 3 **Check your peak flow.** The peak expiratory flow test, or PEF, measures how fast you can blow out. It can show you how open your airways are.
- 4 **Check your inhaler technique.** Even a little tweak can help ensure as much of the medicine as possible ends up in your lungs, where it's needed.
- 5 **Update your written asthma action plan with you.** This is a personalised plan containing the information you need to look after your asthma well. Evidence shows you're four times less likely to end up in hospital if you use a written asthma action plan.
- 6 **Answer any questions you have.**

## Getting the best from your asthma review

### Before your review

- **Write down some questions.** Make sure you cover the important things, such as:
  - Is this the best inhaler for me?
  - How can I cope better with triggers?
  - What do I do if my symptoms get worse?
- **When you have symptoms, take a video of yourself on your phone.** Using a video shows your GP or nurse what your asthma symptoms are really like. It's often easier than trying to describe them. And you may only have 20 minutes for your review, so this can save precious appointment time.
- **Keep a symptom and peak flow diary for a month before your review.** This will give you and your GP or nurse a more accurate picture. Every day, write down anything you think might be a symptom – you'll be able to discuss whether it's connected to your asthma and what you can do about it. Also note down whether you've taken your medicine as prescribed and any triggers you notice.
- **Remember to take your inhaler(s) and spacer to the appointment, plus...**
  - Your written asthma action plan
  - The questions you've prepared
  - A friend to take notes if that's helpful
  - Anything requested by your GP or nurse in your appointment letter

### At your review

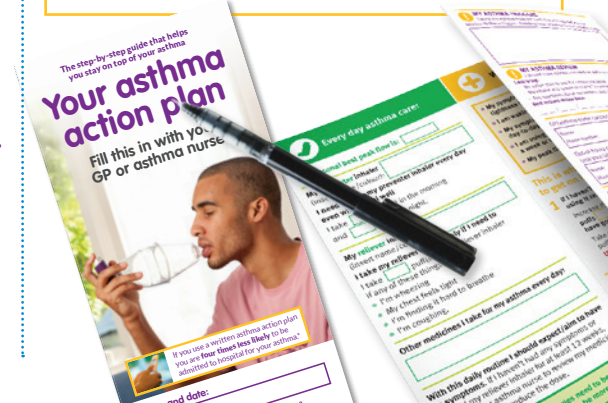
You'll increase your chance of staying well with your asthma and cut your risk of a potentially life-threatening asthma attack if:

- **You talk about any concerns** you have about your symptoms or your medicine.
- **You're honest!** If you keep forgetting to take your inhaler, or don't take it because you're worried about side effects, for example, tell your GP or asthma nurse. They'll want to find ways to support you.
- **You make sure you understand.** Ask questions to be sure you are clear.

### Don't leave your review without:

- An updated written asthma action plan.
- Answers to your questions and concerns.
- Knowing what medicines to take and why.
- Feeling confident you're using your inhaler(s) and spacer in the right way.
- Booking your next review. Ask if there's a text or email reminder service.

If you don't feel satisfied with your review, call our Helpline nurses to chat through ways to get more from the next one. 0300 222 5800 (9am – 5pm; Mon – Fri)



! Don't have an action plan? You can download one here: [www.asthma.org.uk/advice/resources](http://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/resources)

# Your asthma review is essential...

What our asthma nurse specialists say:

“ An asthma review is your chance to make sure you and your doctor or nurse are working together to keep you symptom-free using the least amount of medicine necessary. ”



## ... but when else should you see your GP or asthma nurse?

### Within 24 hours if:

- Your symptoms are getting worse – you may be waking at night or be unable to carry out your daily activities
- You're using your reliever inhaler more than three times a week
- You're off work or school because of your asthma
- You have an asthma attack but don't need to go to hospital

These may all be signs you are at risk of having a potentially life-threatening asthma attack.

### Within two working days if:

- You've had to go to hospital with an asthma attack
- You're running out of inhalers

### Within 4 weeks if:

- You've started a new medicine, to make sure it's working well for you
- Your medicine has been changed or adjusted, to check you're on the right dose

### After 12 weeks if:

- You've had no symptoms – your GP or asthma nurse may reduce your medicine (stepping down)

### Before seasonal triggers if:

- You get hay fever – go the month before it usually starts. Managing hay fever symptoms is an important way of managing your asthma
- You want to discuss a flu jab in the autumn

### At any time if:

- You have concerns about your asthma

### VISIT US



For information, tips and ideas on everything from inhalers to triggers:  
[www.asthma.org.uk](http://www.asthma.org.uk)



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