

What to do if a student has an asthma attack

Be prepared. If you spend time with students who have asthma, be sure to get **medication training** from the school nurse or school district.

1 Stay calm. Have the student sit down.

Speak slowly and clearly. Help the student sit down and stay as calm and quiet as possible.

2 Give asthma medicine immediately. (puffs from the student's rescue inhaler)

Follow written instructions for giving this medicine (instructions should be on the label of the inhaler or in a written medical plan in the student's file).

The student's inhaler might be kept in the school office or health room. If you can't find the student's inhaler, call the parent or guardian immediately.

3 Keep watching constantly for any signs of an emergency.

An asthma attack can turn into an emergency *at any time*. Call 911 if you see *any* of the warning signs of an asthma emergency

4 Help the student relax and stay quiet.

Have the student breathe as slowly and deeply as possible. To make breathing easier, encourage the student to relax his or her shoulders.

5 If breathing doesn't improve, follow directions for giving more medicine.

The instructions on the inhaler or in the student's file will tell what to do if the student needs more medicine.

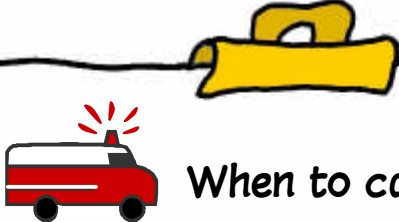
If breathing is not better within 15 minutes after the *first* puffs of rescue medicine – or if breathing starts getting worse -- call 911.

6 Report the asthma attack.

Follow your school's procedures for reporting asthma problems. Make sure that the student's parent or guardian is notified.

Symptoms of an asthma attack:

- Shortness of breath or rapid breathing. The student may be afraid or panicky because it is hard to breathe.
- Coughing or wheezing. Wheezing means making a noise or whistling sound while breathing.
- Feeling of tightness in the chest.



When to call 911

If you see *any* of these warning signs of an emergency, call 911 immediately:

- if** breathing is so difficult that the student has trouble talking or walking
- or** the student's lips or fingernails look gray or blue
- or** the inhaler rescue medicine is not helping
(breathing should improve within 15 minutes after the first puffs from the inhaler)

If you call 911, stay with the student until help arrives, and call the student's parent or guardian.

Not sure whether emergency help is needed? If you are not sure, *do not hesitate* to call 911.