

Physical Activity and Students With Asthma

Physical activity is part of a healthy lifestyle. Overwhelmingly, students with asthma participate in physical activity similar to students without asthma. The following strategies support students with asthma to participate in physical activity:

- Students should not start or initiate a physical activity if asthma symptoms are being experienced. If symptoms are experienced, the student, should use their reliever inhaler and, only when symptoms are completely resolved, the student may initiate the physical activity.
- Ensure a slow warm up has occurred before activities requiring sustained exertion (aerobic function).
- Be aware of potential asthma triggers in the area (for example, poor air quality, high pollen, strong smells (for example, paint, new carpets/flooring) and remove the student from triggers.
- Encourage the student to wear a scarf or facemask in cold weather to help warm and humidify the air.
- Move planned outdoor activities to well-ventilated indoor sites if there are extreme weather conditions (cold, hot, humidity, wind), high pollen counts, or poor air quality.
- Check pollen levels in your community at www.theweathernetwork.ca and air quality forecasts and smog alerts at www.airqualityontario.com.
- Have parents/guardians and students inform staff of modifications or considerations for participating physical activity.
- Notify parents/guardians if the student is not able to fully participate in physical activity because of asthma symptoms; this can be a sign of poorly controlled asthma that needs to be followed-up with their health care provider.