

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 his/her 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.