

PICU Asthma Discharge Instructions

Most people with asthma do not get so sick that they need to be hospitalized. Because your child was a patient in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), you must follow these steps after discharge:

1. **Call** your child's primary doctor to be seen within 2-3 days. Do not wait to call your doctor's office.
2. **Keep your child's appointment** with Pediatric Pulmonary
If you have trouble keeping or making appointments, ask to speak to the office nurse or social worker. Not keeping appointments could lead to a Child Protective Services referral.
3. **Follow the F.L.A.R.E. steps** listed below.

Follow-up with your child's primary doctor - within 2-3 days.

- Following up with your doctor can make emergency care rare.
- **Not going to your child's follow-up appointment can lead to future asthma emergencies or even death.**
- If you have trouble keeping or making an appointment, ask to speak to the office nurse or social worker.
- If your child does not have a primary care doctor call 1(866) 688 - 9050 or call the number on the back of your insurance card to get one.

At the follow up appointment:

- Bring all of your child's medications and this plan with you.
- Make an asthma action plan with your child's doctor that can help you keep your child's asthma under control.
- Write down your questions and your doctor's answers.

Learn about your child's asthma medicines.

- Give your child all of the medicines listed on their asthma action plan exactly like the doctor tells you, even if your child is feeling much better.
- Remember: the controller medicines need to be taken every day in order to work right.

- Remember: rescue medicine does not treat what causes asthma.
- Talk to your doctor about any questions that you have about your child's medications.
- Talk to your doctor before stopping any of your child's medications.

Asthma is a life-long (chronic) disease

Even though your child's breathing is better after their hospital stay, they still need to get long-term control of their asthma. If their asthma is not controlled, they are at risk for more severe flare-ups and even death.

- If they use quick-relief medicine more than 2 times per week then **their asthma is not under control**. Your child needs to see their doctor or an asthma specialist to make a plan to get control of their asthma
- Figure out what things make their asthma flare up and try to stay away from these "triggers".

Respond to warning signs that your child's asthma is getting worse:

- Chest feels tight
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Need to take albuterol 3 times in 1 day for asthma symptoms

Keep giving your child's medicines as prescribed and call their doctor.

Emergency care may be needed if your child:

- Has trouble walking
- Is working hard to breathe (skin may be sucking in at rib cage or above breast bone)
- Need to use quick-relief medicine more than every 4 hours

1. Give your child quick-relief medicine and wait 20 minutes.
2. If they do not feel better, give it again and wait 20 minutes.
3. If still not better, give it again and go to emergency department or call 911 right away.

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by Michigan Medicine for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by Michigan Medicine and for which Michigan Medicine does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Adapted from Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS): [Emergency Department Asthma Discharge Instructions](#).

Patient Education by [Michigan Medicine](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#). Last Revised 8/2017