

GUIDELINES FOR ASTHMA

Asthma is a reversible obstructive airway disease that causes difficulty in breathing due to obstruction of air flow in the bronchial tubes. It is the result of excessive sensitivity of airways, which become blocked by bronchospasms (tight contraction of muscles), swelling and inflammation of the lining of the bronchi, and plugging of the airways by excessive, thick mucus. Air turbulence moving past these obstructed areas produces the characteristic wheezing and coughing associated with asthma.

Signs and symptoms to watch for:

1. Coughing
2. Chest tightness
3. Retractions (abdomen drawing in while breathing)
4. Shortness of Breath
5. Wheezing
6. Increased pulse
7. Increased respiratory rate
8. Symptoms unique to the individual (perspiration, anxiety)
9. Decreased peak flow rate

Asthma can be triggered by allergens such as pollen, molds; irritants such as tobacco smoke, perfumes, or paint; or stimuli like exercise or cold air. The management of asthma at school involves the following steps.

- A. Have the child sit down and try to relax. Reassure.
- B. Ask the child if they have medication at school, and if so, if he/she carries it.
- C. If he/she carries the inhaler, use it. If the inhaler does not give relief within 10 minutes have another student accompany him/her to the office.
- D. If the student does not have an inhaler on them, send them immediately to the office with another student.

****When a child is having an asthma attack, sounds can be heard. If a child appears to be having difficulty breathing and is unable to speak, cough, or moan, get emergency help-CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY****

Office: Administer inhaler as directed. If student has taken their own inhaler please do not give medication again prior to 4 hours. Call Cheryl for assistance if no relief within 15 minutes: extension 7405 (call cell if no answer in office). Call Parents for assistance. Give student warm fluids to drink if student is able. Reassure to reduce panic. **Call 911 if** student is unable to move air-lips/nails are blue, or student is unable to speak, cough or moan, is gasping for air, or chest/neck is retracting with breathing.

If the child has an EMP on file, those instructions override these guidelines.