

May Newsletter

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Managing asthma and allergies takes more than medication – it takes a community.

- Better day-to-day symptom management
- Healthier, more inclusive spaces at home, school, and work
- Access to more treatment options
- Stronger protections and policies that improve quality of life

💙 Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) has tools and support for identifying triggers, managing symptoms, and living well with asthma/allergies.

🫁 Asthma: Signs & Symptoms

Know your symptoms, use rescue medicine early, and recognize emergencies.

What changes in your airways with asthma? 🔍

1. Swelling inside the airways
2. Excess mucus clogs the airways
3. Muscles tighten and squeeze around the airways

This narrowing is an asthma episode (flare-up/attack). Symptoms may be mild or severe and can last minutes to days.

Common asthma symptoms ✓

1. Shortness of breath
2. Cough
3. Chest tightness or pain
4. Wheeze (a whistling sound when you breathe)
5. Waking at night due to asthma symptoms
6. A drop in your peak flow meter reading (if you use one)

Symptoms vary—track yours and share patterns with your clinician.

🚨 Asthma attack prep: have an Asthma Action Plan

Create an Asthma Action Plan with your doctor. Keep a copy handy, take it to visits to update it, and follow it—use quick-relief medicine at the first sign of symptoms.

⚠️ **Early warning signs an episode may be starting**

Early warning signs can signal an episode before obvious symptoms.

Common signs include:

- Increased mucus/sputum production
- Runny/stuffy/congested nose
- Itchy neck or chin
- Feeling tired, weak, or low energy
- Raised shoulders or slouching

If you notice your warning signs, treat it like the Yellow/Caution Zone and follow your plan.

🌿 **Allergies: The Basics**

Allergies happen when your immune system overreacts to a usually harmless substance (allergen). Some people produce IgE antibodies that trigger symptoms—an allergic reaction.

Common types of allergens 🧪

- Drug (medicine)
- Food
- Insects that sting (bee, wasp, fire ant), bite (mosquito, tick), or are household pests (cockroach and dust mite)
- Mold
- Pet (dog or cat urine, saliva, and dander)
- Pollen

Symptoms of allergies 😞

Typical symptoms include watery eyes, runny nose, sneezing, and hives. Trouble breathing or swelling in the mouth/throat may be anaphylaxis.

Diagnosis + treatment (quick guide) 🏠💊

Doctors typically review history, do an exam, and run tests to identify allergens. Management usually includes avoiding triggers when possible, using appropriate medications, and sometimes immunotherapy. 🧬

🍷 **Food Allergies & Food-Induced Anaphylaxis**

Food allergies plus asthma can increase risk. The only prevention is strict avoidance. Reactions can escalate to anaphylaxis—treat immediately.

Breathing trouble can happen with both asthma and food reactions - these tips may help you decide:

- Breathing symptoms only (no other body systems): likely asthma—follow your Asthma Action Plan.

- Symptoms started before eating: likely asthma—follow your Allergy Action Plan.
- Food allergy symptoms often start quickly after eating the problem food.
- Two+ body systems (breathing + hives/swelling/itchy mouth/throat or GI symptoms): follow your Anaphylaxis Action Plan.

✔ Quick reminders

- Keep your action plans easy to access.
- Share key info with caregivers/school/work when appropriate.
- Reduce triggers when you can (smoke, scents, dust, mold, pollen).
- Carry prescribed rescue/emergency meds, check expiration dates.

🗨️ Next steps

If symptoms of asthma or allergies aren't well-controlled, schedule a check-in with your doctor and update your action plans. Ask about triggers, medication technique, and emergency steps. If you do not have an Asthma Action Plan or an Allergy Action Plan, download your copy below 📎

Take the form to your doctor and have them fill it out and review it with you. If this plan is for your child, share it with schools, babysitters, and other caregivers.

ASTHMA Action Plan

<https://aafa.org/asthma/asthma-treatment/asthma-treatment-action-plan>

FOOD ALLERGY Action Plans

Although the plan's title states "Food Allergy", it can be used for any allergy that is at risk of progressing to anaphylaxis. This includes bee/wasp stings, drug allergies, latex allergy.

Children Under 3

<https://aafa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/allergy-anaphylaxis-action-plan-children-under-3.pdf>

Ages 3 and Up

<https://kidswithfoodallergies.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/allergy-anaphylaxis-action-plan-children-3-and-up.pdf>

Scripture for the Month

"But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds," declares the LORD" ~
[Jeremiah 30:17](#)

In Faith & Health
Health & Wellness Ministry
Fountain of Faith Missionary Baptist Church