

**Taking care with Asthma**

When you have a long-term condition, it’s important to take care of yourself and follow the advice of your GP practice and consultants so you can prevent your condition from worsening or getting complications.

This guide will help you to know what you should be doing, and what to do if you start feeling worse. Our aim is to ensure that you get the care you need, when you need it. We want you to be able to look after yourself and know your warning signs, so that you don’t end up in an emergency situation.

**Treatment**

While there's currently no cure for asthma, there are a number of treatments that can help control the condition. Most asthma treatments are taken using an inhaler, a small device that delivers a spray or powder medicine to your lungs as you breathe in. The main treatments are:

* identifying and avoiding asthma triggers if possible
* reliever inhalers – inhalers used when needed to quickly relieve asthma symptoms for a short time
* preventer inhalers – inhalers used regularly every day to reduce the inflammation in the breathing tubes, which prevents asthma symptoms occurring

**You'll usually draw up a personal action plan with your doctor or asthma nurse. This will include information about your medicines, how to monitor your condition andwhat to do if you have an asthma attack.**

If you do not have an action plan, please contact your asthma nurse at your surgery.

**When to get medical advice**

Please make sure you are familiar with your action plan and understand what it means for you. If you feel that your asthma is getting worse, as well as refereeing to your action plan, you should contact your GP or asthma nurse early for advice.

Only attend A&E if you are having significant difficulty breathing and your reliever inhalers are not working.

Remember you can access GP services 24 hours a day, seven days per week. If you need to speak to a GP out of hours, then phone NHS 111 and they will arrange for you to speak to a professional.