

July 4, 2014



# Share the Wellness Tip

## Keeping Children's Asthma Under Control

Have you started planning for a summer trip away from home? Start making plans to keep your child's asthma in control. When your child has asthma, the condition is always there, even when things are going fine. Symptoms can flare up at any time. Yet there is a lot you can do to reduce the chance of that happening. By following an action plan, most children with asthma can do all the fun things they want to do with few, if any, symptoms

Your child's asthma action plan tells how to:

- Reduce exposure to things that set off asthma flare-ups
- Use a quick-relief inhaler at the first sign of symptoms
- Take a long-term control medication every day, if needed.

### Talk with the Doctor

Before you leave on vacation, make sure your child's asthma is under control. Talk with the doctor if your child's symptoms have been more frequent or severe lately. Let the doctor know if symptoms are interfering with your child's daily activities or sleep. If needed, the doctor can adjust your child's asthma action plan.

You can also ask your child's doctor to:

- Provide an extra written prescription, in case your child's medication is lost
- Recommend a health care facility in the place your family is visiting
- Suggest ways to manage triggers your child may run into on the trip.

### Following an Action Plan

It's easier to forget healthy habits when your family takes a break from the usual routine. Make a conscious choice to keep up good habits on vacation, such as eating a balanced diet and getting enough sleep. For your child with asthma, good asthma care is as important while away as it is at home. Do what you can to protect your child from asthma triggers when you are away:

- Continue giving your child asthma medication as directed.
- Keep checking your child's peak flow as often as recommended.
- To protect against dust mites, it may be wise to pack your own allergy-proof pillow or mattress casings.
- Treat asthma at the first sign that your child's symptoms are getting worse.
- Follow the steps outlined in your child's asthma action plan.

Last but not least, enjoy your time away from home together. Having asthma shouldn't stop your child from having fun.

*Sources: Asthma and Allergy Foundation; Kidshealth.org*

