

Asthma First Aid

FACT SHEET prepared by the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation NZ

A

ASSESS

Mild? Short of breath, wheeze, cough, chest tightness.
Moderate? Loud wheeze, breathing difficulty, can only speak in short sentences.
Severe? Distressed, gasping for breath, difficulty speaking two words, blueness around the mouth.

**IF THE PERSON HAS SEVERE ASTHMA OR IS FRIGHTENED,
CALL AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY – DIAL 111.**

S

SIT

Sit the person upright and stay with them.
Reassure calmly.

T

TREAT

Treat with 6 puffs of the blue 'reliever' inhaler.
Use a spacer, if available, for aerosol inhalers.
(One puff at a time in the spacer, person to take 6 breaths each puff.)

H

HELP

If not improving after 6 minutes, **call the ambulance**. Continue to use blue inhaler 6 puffs (as above) every 6 minutes until help arrives.
In an emergency situation you will not overdose the person by giving them the reliever every 6 minutes.

M

MONITOR

If improving after 6 minutes, keep monitoring. If necessary, repeat doses of blue inhaler.

A

ALL OK!

When free of wheeze, cough and breathlessness, return to normal **quiet** activity. If symptoms recur, repeat treatment and rest. See your doctor.

Remember the Rule of Six:
6 doses of medication (one puff at a time) - 6 breaths per puff - 6 minute wait