

# Asthma During Pregnancy

## What You Need to Know When You're Expecting



Pregnancy is such an exciting and special time for parents-to-be. But people with asthma may worry about how their disease may affect their pregnancy and babies.

Asthma is one of the most common medical concerns that occurs during pregnancy. Complications from asthma may include:



A small increased risk of preterm (early) labor and delivery



High blood pressure and a related condition known as pre-eclampsia



Low birth weight (babies born weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces)

It is not known if asthma is the direct cause of these problems or if other reasons are to blame. Keeping asthma well-controlled may help reduce the chance of complications.

### Keep Your Asthma Well-Controlled

Uncontrolled asthma can decrease oxygen to the fetus. Avoid or reduce **asthma triggers** like dust mites and secondhand smoke. Get the flu and COVID-19 vaccines (safe during pregnancy) to cut your chance of getting a serious respiratory infection.

During pregnancy, doctors may consider some asthma medicines to be safer than others, so your medicines may change. Work with your doctors to find the best treatment for you.

An asthma management plan that helps keep the person's asthma well-controlled will be the best approach for parent and baby.

### Update Your Asthma Action Plan

Asthma symptoms may get worse, stay the same or get better during pregnancy. Talk with your health care provider to make sure the medicines you are taking are still the right choice. Ask them about a pregnancy Asthma Action Plan.

### Resources

Visit [aafa.org/asthma-triggers-causes](https://aafa.org/asthma-triggers-causes) for more information on asthma triggers.

Visit [aafa.org/actionplan](https://aafa.org/actionplan) to download an Asthma Action Plan.

Visit [aafa.org/pregnancy](https://aafa.org/pregnancy) for more information on asthma and pregnancy.

AAFA is working with researchers and others to improve medical care for people with asthma who are pregnant and lactating. Black and American Indian/Alaska Native people are at highest risk for asthma and pregnancy complications.

AAFA offers emotional support and education on our online community. Membership is free.

**We're here for you at every life stage.**  
Join us at [aafa.org/join](https://aafa.org/join)

# PREGNANCY AND LACTATION ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Health Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Frequency of asthma check-up visits: \_\_\_\_\_ Personal Best Peak Flow: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of asthma biologic (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of ultrasound for growth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Biophysical profile recommended: Y \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_ Date of last COVID-19/flu vaccine: \_\_\_\_\_

## GREEN/GO ZONE:

Doing Well with all of these

- ✓ No coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, or difficulty breathing
- ✓ Can work, play, exercise, perform usual activities without symptoms
- ✓ Good fetal movements

Take these medicines for control and maintenance:

Medicine	How much to take	When and how often

## YELLOW/WARNING ZONE:

Caution/Getting Worse if you have any of these

- ✓ Coughing, wheezing, chest tightness / pain, or difficulty breathing
- ✓ Symptoms with daily activities, work, play, and exercise
- ✓ Waking up at night with symptoms
- ✓ Reduced fetal movements

CONTINUE your Green Zone medicines PLUS take these quick relief/rescue medicines:

Medicine	How much to take	When and how often

**Call your doctor if you have been in the Yellow Zone for more than 24 hours.**

**Also call your OB immediately if there are reduced fetal movements.**

## RED/DANGER ZONE:

Alert if you have any of these!

- ✓ Difficulty breathing, coughing, wheezing not helped with medications
- ✓ Trouble walking or talking due to asthma symptoms
- ✓ Not responding to quick relief medication
- ✓ Headache, vomiting
- ✓ Vaginal bleeding

**FOR EXTREME TROUBLE BREATHING/SHORTNESS OF BREATH GET IMMEDIATE HELP!**

Take these quick relief/rescue medicines:

Medicine	How much to take	When and how often

**GO to the hospital/emergency department or CALL for an ambulance NOW!**