

# Lifestyle Changes to Help You Manage Your Asthma

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When it comes to managing asthma, sometimes making small changes in your daily routine can add up to big differences in how you feel.

Managing asthma is never easy, but if you find that your symptoms are interfering with your regular activities, it's important to take the time to reevaluate your lifestyle and determine ways to do things that may help you breathe better.

Please consider the following recommendations that can help you take control of your asthma and your health.

**Take your asthma medication as directed.** This may sound like an obvious step, but all too often, people skip doses of their medication or go without entirely when they're feeling well. This can be a big problem since the key to controlling your asthma is to be proactive and keep your symptoms in check.

**Have a plan.** Your doctor can help you develop an asthma action plan that will tell you what to do in a variety of situations. It will also remind you what warning signs to look out for so you can make any needed changes to your medication to head off any serious attacks.

**Exercise good judgment.** You don't have to shy away from exercise, but there are some activities that may be less strenuous on your sensitive airways. For instance, swimming, walking and yoga are a few examples of sports that can be good for you and gentle on your lungs, too. Just make sure your symptoms are controlled before you begin any new routine. Also listen to your body and skip your workout on days when you aren't feeling well.

**Allergy-proof your night.** Since you likely spend much time in your bedroom at night, you'll need to minimize your exposure to allergens that could spark your asthma into gear. To this end, remove rugs, curtains and other dust collectors from the area where you sleep. Also, wash bedding in hot water and use a hypoallergenic mattress cover.

**Come clean.** Dust mites, pollen and mold that gets trapped in your home can prompt an allergic asthma reaction. Therefore, making the time to thoroughly clean your house room by room can be essential. However, know that some cleaning products can further aggravate asthma symptoms, so you'll need to be extra careful not to breathe in any fumes. Wear a facemask and try to choose mild cleansers. Vacuum regularly and run your air conditioner to purify the space in which you breathe.

**Give pets a place.** You may love your dog, but his dander could be worsening your asthma symptoms. If you think that your pet is to blame for that bothersome wheeze, consider banning him from your room and confining him to a separate part of the house.

**Take care.** Part of managing asthma is to not just to respond to symptoms once they kick in, but also to make a real effort to take care of yourself and your health. This will allow your immune system to be at its best and make you less susceptible to respiratory ailments that can aggravate asthma. You should take care to eat balanced meals, watch your weight, get plenty of sleep, and steer clear of other people who are sick. Finally, set realistic goals for yourself and try your best to manage your stress.

**Sources:**  
**The Mayo Clinic**

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/asthma/DS00021/DSECTION=lifestyle%2Dand%2Dhome%2Dremedies>