

Module 11

Asthma – Lesson 2: Managing Asthma



Learning Outcomes

Pupils will understand:

- how asthma can affect participation in sports and how it can be managed effectively;
- the types of asthma medications (preventers and relievers) and their functions;
- when to use each type of inhaler; and
- strategies for managing asthma, including medication, lifestyle adjustments and avoiding triggers.



Resources

- **PowerPoint presentation which includes a Guess the Athlete game;**
- **one whiteboard per group;**
- **blue and brown asthma inhalers to show and for a relay race;**
- **Resource 5 worksheet and answers (lower ability); and**
- **Resource 6 worksheet and answers (higher ability).**



Teaching Notes

Introduction (10 minutes)

Key question: Is asthma a barrier to keeping active? (PowerPoint) class discussion.

Guess the athlete game – use the PowerPoint slides and present the clues one at a time. Encourage groups to guess the athlete. After each guess reveal the athlete's name and describe their asthma story, using the PowerPoint presentation.

Key questions: How are the asthma stories different? How are they the same?

Key fact: Asthma is manageable even at the highest levels of competition and did not prevent these athletes from achieving greatness.

At this point, introduce the learning outcomes using the PowerPoint presentation.

Development

- **Treatment for asthma – inhalers (10 minutes)**

True or False activity – use this slide to consolidate some facts about asthma and its treatment.

Encourage your pupils to write their answers on whiteboards (5 minutes). Discuss the answers and clarify any misconceptions.

Use the PowerPoint to introduce what an inhaler is, the different types of inhalers and how they work (5 minutes).

- **Worksheet and extension discussion (15 minutes)**

Print out and use **Resource 5** or **6** (page 1) to help your pupils to consolidate the use of the different inhalers. **Resource 5** uses a word bank prompt and cloze procedure as opposed to extended writing. Discuss the answers or display them on screen.

Extension: Add open-ended discussion questions such as:

- What would happen if the wrong inhaler was used in this situation?

Answer: Using the wrong inhaler could make the condition worse. For example, if a quick-relief inhaler (**blue**) is used when a preventer (**brown**) is needed, it might temporarily ease symptoms but won't treat the underlying inflammation, leading to worse symptoms later.

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- Why is it important to use a preventer even if you feel fine?
Answer: Preventer inhalers reduce inflammation and prevent future asthma attacks. Even if you feel fine, inflammation in the airways may still be present and skipping the preventer can increase the risk of an attack. Regular use helps keep asthma under control and prevents sudden flare-ups.

How to use an inhaler (5 minutes)

Use the Powerpoint presentation to explain how to use an inhaler. Demonstrate using a real blue inhaler with no medication.

The [Asthma – How to Use Your Inhaler](#) video on YouTube, although animated and quite simple, is a quick summary of how to use an inhaler.

Introduce the use of spacers.

Game – Inhaler Relay Race (5 minutes)

Choose two teams of four. Give each team an empty inhaler or a cardboard toilet roll tube as a prop.

Ask the first player in each team to run to the designated spot and simulate using the inhaler, talking through the steps correctly. They then run back to tag the next player in line. If they do not use the inhaler correctly, they must start again.

Reflection

- What was easy or hard about using the inhaler?
- Why is it important to stay calm and follow the correct inhaler steps?
- What could happen if the inhaler is not used properly?

Strategies for managing asthma (5 minutes)

- Class discussion using the PowerPoint presentation.

Plenary (5 minutes)

Depending on time, use one of these activities:

Activity 1 Asthma Quiz

Divide the class into small teams and ask quickfire questions based on the lesson content.

1. **What is asthma?**

Answer: A condition where the airways narrow, swell and may produce extra mucus, making it difficult to breathe.

2. **What are the two types of asthma inhalers?**

Answer: Relievers (**blue**) and preventers (**brown**).

3. **What does a reliever inhaler do?**

Answer: It quickly opens up the airways during an asthma attack to relieve symptoms.

4. **Why is a preventer inhaler used every day?**

Answer: To reduce inflammation and prevent asthma attacks.

5. **Name one common asthma trigger.**

Answer: Dust, pollen, exercise, cold air, smoke or pet dander.

6. **How can athletes with asthma manage their condition?**

Answer: By using preventer medication, warming up properly and carrying a reliever inhaler.

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7. **What one lifestyle change can help manage asthma?**

Answer: Avoiding known triggers such as allergens or smoking.

8. **What is the key difference between preventer and reliever inhalers?**

Answer: Preventers are used daily to prevent attacks. Relievers are used during an asthma attack to ease symptoms.

Activity 2: Minute to Reflect

- Give your pupils sticky notes.
- Ask them to write down:
 - **one** thing they learned today; and
 - **one** question they still have.
- Collect and discuss a few responses as a class, addressing any questions raised.

Activity 3: Three, Two, One

- Ask the class to share:
 - **three** things they learned;
 - **two** things they found interesting; and
 - **one** question they still have.
- Discuss the activity as a group to reinforce learning and address any gaps.

Display and revisit the learning outcomes.



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Resource Sheet 5: Worksheet

For each of the following situations, choose the inhaler you would use. Complete the explanation using words from the box below.

relax	open	attack	inhale	inflammation
prevents	spray	daily	exhale	monthly

Situation 1

You're playing soccer and suddenly feel short of breath and start wheezing. You're coughing and struggling to keep up with the game.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation

This inhaler is used during an asthma _____ or when you feel breathless. It makes the muscles around your airways _____ and keeps them _____ helping you to breathe again.

Situation 2

You wake up every morning coughing and feeling tightness in your chest. This has been happening for weeks, even though you're not having any full asthma attacks.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation

This inhaler reduces _____ in the airways and _____ symptoms from developing over time. It needs to be used _____ even when you feel fine, to stop symptoms from getting worse.

Situation 3

You have a chest infection and your asthma has worsened. You're very short of breath and your usual inhalers aren't helping enough.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation

This delivers medication as a fine _____, which can be easier to _____ when symptoms are severe. It's used in emergencies when inhalers don't work effectively.

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Resource Sheet 5: Worksheet (continued)

For each of the following situations, choose the inhaler you would use. Complete the explanation using words from the box below.

relax	open	attack	inhale	inflammation
prevents	spray	daily	exhale	monthly

Situation 4

You're preparing for games class and your doctor has told you that exercise can sometimes trigger your asthma. You're not currently experiencing any symptoms.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation

This inhaler can be used before exercise to _____ symptoms from occurring. It helps _____ your airways before they become tight.

Situation 5

You've been feeling fine for a while so you've stopped using your brown inhaler daily because you think you don't need it anymore.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation

This inhaler prevents _____ in your airways and stops symptoms from developing. Even if you feel fine, asthma is still present and needs to be managed _____.

Situation 6

You're outside on a cold, windy day and your asthma starts acting up. You feel your chest tighten and you struggle to breathe.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation

Cold air is a common asthma _____. This inhaler works quickly to _____ your airways, relieving the symptoms caused by the trigger.

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Resource Sheet 5: Answers and Explanations

Situation 1

Inhaler: **Blue**

Explanation

This inhaler is used during an asthma **attack** or when you feel breathless. It makes the muscles around your airways **relax** and keeps them **open**, helping you to breathe again.

Situation 2

Inhaler: **Brown**

Explanation

This inhaler reduces **inflammation** in the airways and **prevents** symptoms from developing over time. It needs to be used **daily** even when you feel fine, to stop symptoms from getting worse.

Situation 3

Inhaler: **Nebuliser**

Explanation

This delivers medication as a fine **spray**, which can be easier to **inhale** when symptoms are severe. It's used in emergencies when inhalers don't work effectively.

Situation 4

Inhaler: **Blue**

Explanation

This inhaler can be used before exercise to **prevent** symptoms from occurring. It helps **open** your airways before they become tight.

Situation 5

Inhaler: **Brown**

Explanation

This inhaler prevents **inflammation** in your airways and stops symptoms from developing. Even if you feel fine, asthma is still present and needs to be managed **daily**.

Situation 6

Inhaler: **Blue**

Explanation

Cold air is a common asthma **trigger**. This inhaler works quickly to **open** your airways, relieving the symptoms caused by the trigger.

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Resource Sheet 6: Worksheet

For each of the following situations, choose the inhaler you would use you would use and give a short explanation.

Situation 1

You're playing soccer and suddenly feel short of breath and start wheezing. You're coughing and struggling to keep up with the game.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation _____

Situation 2

You wake up every morning coughing and feeling tightness in your chest. This has been happening for weeks, even though you're not having any full asthma attacks.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation _____

Situation 3

You have a chest infection and your asthma has worsened. You're very short of breath and your usual inhalers aren't helping enough.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation _____

Situation 4

You're preparing for games class and your doctor has told you that exercise can sometimes trigger your asthma. You're not currently experiencing any symptoms.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation _____

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Resource Sheet 6: Worksheet (continued)

Situation 5

You've been feeling fine for a while so you've stopped using your brown inhaler daily because you think you don't need it anymore.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation _____

Situation 6

You're outside on a cold, windy day, and your asthma starts acting up. You feel your chest tighten and you struggle to breathe.

Inhaler: _____

Explanation _____

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Resource Sheet 6: Answers and Explanations

Situation 1

Answer: **Blue** inhaler (reliever)

Explanation

The blue inhaler is used during an asthma attack or when you feel breathless. It relaxes the muscles around your airways, opening them quickly to help you breathe again.

Situation 2

Answer: **Brown** inhaler (preventer)

Explanation

The brown inhaler reduces inflammation in the airways and prevents symptoms from developing over time. You need to use it daily, even when you feel fine, to stop symptoms from getting worse.

Situation 3

Answer: **Nebuliser**

Explanation

A nebuliser delivers medication as a fine mist which can be easier to inhale when symptoms are severe. It's often used in emergencies or severe cases when inhalers don't work effectively.

Situation 4

Answer: **Blue** inhaler (reliever before exercise)

Explanation

If prescribed, the blue inhaler can be used preventively before exercise to stop symptoms from occurring. It helps relax your airways before they become tight.

Situation 5

Answer: Start using your **brown** inhaler (preventer) again

Explanation

Preventers reduce inflammation in your airways and stop symptoms from developing. Even if you feel fine, asthma is still present and needs to be managed daily.

Situation 6

Answer: **Blue** inhaler (reliever)

Explanation

Cold air is a common asthma trigger. The blue inhaler works quickly to open your airways, relieving the symptoms caused by the trigger.