

10 Things Teachers Should Know About Asthma

- 1) Asthma is a chronic lung disease. It doesn't go away, but its symptoms can be controlled.
- 2) Asthma “triggers,” or things that make asthma worse, are different for each student. Know the student’s triggers to help reduce exposures.
- 3) Students with asthma may need to visit the school nurse more often. They may also miss school days due to their asthma.
- 4) Asthma attacks can get bad quickly. There are “noisy” asthma attacks (you may hear wheezing or coughing), and “silent” attacks (you may not hear the student struggling to breathe, but they can appear very tired or distressed).
- 5) After taking their asthma medication, a student may feel jittery and hyper afterwards. It may be hard to sit still.
- 6) Students with asthma may be sleepy during the day or even fall asleep at school because asthma symptoms can worsen at night and affect sleep quality.
- 7) Students with asthma may need to take asthma medication before gym or recess, and they may need to take breaks.
- 8) A student with asthma should have an asthma action plan and a rescue medication that is easily accessible at school. Bring these items along when you go on field trips or leave school property with the student.
- 9) Students with asthma may get bullied for being different. Watch for anxiety and low self-esteem, and provide support when needed.
- 10) Asthma can affect a student’s overall academic progress and social-emotional learning. Build a support team that includes the child, the parents/caregivers and the school nurse, to work together to promote the student’s success.

Thank you for supporting students with asthma!

Visit www.chawisconsin.org/initiatives/environmental-health/ or www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/asthma/index.htm for more information.