

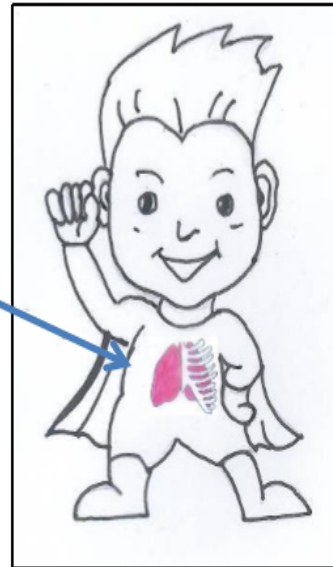
Viral Wheeze & Asthma

Viral-induced wheeze

Wheeze is the high-pitched, whistling sound made when the **small airways (breathing tubes)** in your lungs become inflamed and swollen. **Your lungs** are the balloon-like structures that sit underneath your ribs and move air in and out.

Viral wheeze is a common condition where infants and toddlers become wheezy when they have a cough or a cold. The wheezing makes it difficult to breathe which can be **serious or life-threatening** if not treated properly.

Most children who wheeze with colds (viral wheeze) will grow out of the condition before starting school. It does not necessarily mean they will go on to develop asthma. However, if your child is often wheezy and/or coughs at night or with exercise, please speak to your GP for further advice.



What is the treatment for viral wheeze?

Unfortunately, there is no treatment to get rid of the viral illness. Antibiotics do not help. There are medications to treat the wheeze and difficulty in breathing.

Salbutamol (Ventolin) inhaler - also known as a RELIEVER

This **BLUE-COLOURED** inhaler can open the airways when you are unwell and make it easier to breathe.



If your child is having lots of episodes of viral wheeze, your Doctor might start an extra medication or a regular **preventer** inhaler to be taken **every day** to stop them becoming wheezy with coughs and colds.

Asthma

Asthma is a long-term condition where the small airways in your lungs become **inflamed, swollen and narrow** when they meet a trigger. An asthma **trigger** is anything that makes your asthma worse by irritating your **sensitive airways**, such as colds, exercise or allergies.

Asthma symptoms include **coughing, wheezing and difficulty in breathing**. Asthma tends to be diagnosed in **school-aged children**. It is a common condition affecting **1 in 11 children**.

How do you treat asthma?

Reliever inhaler

Like the treatment for viral wheeze, this **BLUE-COLOURED** inhaler contains the medication **Salbutamol (Ventolin)** which opens up the airways in an **emergency**. The medication starts to work within a **few minutes**. Your personalised asthma management plan will explain how to use this inhaler when you are unwell.



Preventer inhaler

If your asthma is not controlled, your Doctor may start an extra medication called a **PREVENTER inhaler**. These are normally coloured **BROWN** or **PURPLE**.



Preventer inhalers contain a small amount of steroid medication which helps to stop your airways becoming swollen and **prevents** your asthma symptoms. This inhaler **should be taken every day** as prescribed even if you feel well and should only be stopped by your Doctor or Nurse

If you require an adrenaline pen for allergies, make sure you have it with you at all times and ensure it is in date.

How do I use a spacer?

A spacer is a clear plastic tube that attaches to your inhaler and helps increase the amount of medication that gets into your lungs and reduces the possibility of side effects. **You must always use a spacer when taking your inhaler**. There are different types of spacers that can be prescribed.

A **face-mask** should be used with the spacer in children under the age of five years old or those who might find it difficult to use a spacer (such as children with special needs).

Follow the steps below to use your spacer:

1. Shake the inhaler and attach it to the end of the spacer.
2. Place the spacer mouth-piece into your mouth (or face-mask over nose and mouth).
3. Tilt the spacer upwards in children under five years old.
4. Press the inhaler once and take 10 normal breaths. Count the breaths out for younger children.
5. Repeat steps 1-4 for each puff prescribed.



Don't forget your management plan!

All children and young people with viral wheeze or asthma must have a personalised action plan that explains how to treat their condition and when they need to worry.