

# Exercising With Asthma: A Guide for Teens and Adults With Asthma



### What is exercise-induced asthma?

Many of the more than 20 million Americans with asthma have asthma symptoms while exercising. This is called exercise-induced asthma (EIA). Symptoms of EIA may start 5 to 20 minutes after starting to exercise and may continue for some time after stopping the exercise.

### Can I still be active?

Talk to your health care provider about the activities you enjoy doing. With the proper guidance and medicines, you can still lead an active life even if you have EIA.

### What activities can I do?

Every person is different. Always talk to your health care provider before participating in any sports or strenuous activities.

Some sports are considered better for a person with EIA, like swimming and walking. Sports with short bursts of energy, like football, baseball, and sprinting, are also considered to be easier.

However, sports that require long periods of exertion with little or no rest, like hockey, long-distance running, and soccer, may cause more asthma flare-ups. These sports should not be considered off-limits, but they should be approached with caution. Talk to your health care provider first.

### Warm up, cool down

Warm up before exercising and cool down after exercising. This may reduce flare-ups.

### Keep out the cold

Cold air is a common asthma trigger. Use a loose scarf to cover your nose and mouth in cold weather. If possible, exercise in warm and humid places.

### Medicine

Your health care provider may have prescribed a medicine to help control EIA. As always, follow your health care provider's advice about medicine and exercise.

### Let others know

Make sure your family, friends, teachers, and coaches know about your asthma.

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### What are your goals and expectations?

List your goals and expectations for your physical activity. These can be anything from exercising daily to dreams of becoming a professional athlete. Share these goals with your health care provider. Together, you can discuss these possibilities.

I would like to be able to...

