



# School Nurse Health Watch



School

Date

Nurse

## Don't Let Asthma Stop Your Child from Participating in Sports!

Does your child have trouble breathing while participating in physical activity? Many children experience wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath when exercising. This condition is called exercise-induced asthma (EIA). Children who experience these symptoms may become frightened, resulting in limitations in their activity. With proper treatment from a physician, these children can participate in sports or exercise activities.



Exercise is very important for the development of a child. Exercise helps the lungs and heart work well. Without routine exercise, the muscles and lungs become weak. When a child is physically fit, it is easier to breathe. Here are a few tips for parents to help manage your child's symptoms while exercising or participating in sports:

- ◆ First, contact your child's doctor. A doctor can help determine if your child has exercise-induced asthma. Your doctor will give you an asthma care plan that will likely include medication to take before exercising.
- ◆ Encourage your child to follow the doctor's instructions about using medication before or after exercising.
- ◆ Inform the school nurse about your child's asthma and medication(s). If your child is on a team, inform the coach about the doctor's instructions.
- ◆ Teach your child to do some warm-up exercises for a few minutes before activity. The ex-

ercises can include running in place or stretching.

- ◆ Try to avoid exercising in cold, dry air, or hazy/humid conditions that can irritate the bronchial airways. In the winter, a lightly wrapped scarf around the nose and mouth can keep inhaled air moist.
- ◆ Consider sports that allow for short breaks in the activity. Some of the activities include volleyball, golf, baseball, gymnastics, tennis, swimming, and short distance track. These activities are less likely to create an exercise-induced episode.
- ◆ Make sure your child carries a rescue inhaler in case of emergency. With proper medical management, no child with asthma should be deprived of an active childhood.
- ◆ For more school health information, contact your child's school nurse at \_\_\_\_\_.



Contributed by the Central Ohio Association of School Nurses