

School Camps & Excursions: Asthma

If your child has asthma, attending school camps and excursions can introduce them to new asthma triggers especially if they are going into new environments. It is essential that your child can participate fully and safely in all school activities. The following is a list of considerations to make for your child before they go on school camp or an excursion:

- Is your child's asthma currently well controlled (*e.g.* no symptoms at night, reliever use less than 3 times per week)?
- Has your child had an asthma attack or asthma symptoms recently?
- Does the school have an Asthma Action Plan for your child?
- Has the school asked you to complete a School Camp and Excursion Medical Update Form?
- Does your child have their reliever medication and spacer on hand at all times?
- Are they attending with any other medications to be taken on the camp/excursion? If so, are there sufficient instructions to staff for use/dosage?
- Does your child self-administer their medication? If so, has their technique been checked recently?



For more information please contact The Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 278 462 or www.asthma.org.au.

Asthma and Complementary Therapies

Complementary or alternative therapies are becoming increasingly popular in Australia, and many people seek out complementary remedies to support their health. As with any health condition, if you or a family member have asthma and are considering using complementary therapies, we strongly advise that you communicate with your doctor about your asthma treatment. They may even be able to suggest safe therapies to try! It is equally important to communicate to any complementary therapists about your asthma so that they can avoid treatments that are known to potentially make ones asthma worse.

Complementary therapies considered safe for asthma are: exercise programs, vitamin D, low-salt diet, some Chinese herbal medicines, some Indian (ayurvedic) herbs, music therapy, tai chi, buteyko (breathing technique).

Complementary therapies considered potentially unsafe for asthma are: inhaled salt (small risk of a fungal respiratory infection), echinacea, bee pollen or royal jelly (propolis), and products containing aspirin.

Remember, response to treatments and medications differs between people. Make sure you or your children continue taking any asthma medications prescribed unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. Stopping asthma medications suddenly can result in worsening asthma symptoms and even an asthma attack. For more information regarding complementary therapies and asthma please refer to The National Asthma Council (NAC) <http://www.nationalasthma.org.au/> or contact The Asthma Foundation of Victoria for your free copy of the new NAC Asthma & Complementary Therapies brochure



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