



Asthma Medicine

Medications are one of the most important ways to treat or prevent asthma symptoms. There are **two types** of asthma medications: quick relief (rescue/reliever) medications and controller medications.

Quick-Relief (Rescue or Reliever) Medications

Rescue/reliever medications are fast-acting medications used to relieve asthma symptoms within five to 20 minutes. They should be used whenever needed, based on symptoms. These types of medicines are usually inhaled directly into the lungs through an inhaler or a nebulizer.

Rescue/reliever medications:

- Relieve asthma symptoms once they have started.
- Are fast-acting (start working in five to 20 minutes).
- Do not control or prevent inflammation in the airways.
- Relax the tightened muscle bands around the airways (bronchospasm).
- Should only be needed occasionally. Talk to your doctor if you find you are using quick-relief medications more than twice a week to control your breathing. **Using too frequently use may be dangerous.**

Controller Medications

Controller medications work slowly over a longer period of time (weeks to months) to reduce airway inflammation and help prevent asthma symptoms from occurring in the first place.

Controller medications:

- Prevent asthma symptoms from occurring and reduce and/or prevent:
 - Inflammation and scarring in the airways.
 - Tightening of the muscle bands around the airways (bronchospasm).
- Will not provide quick relief of asthma symptoms.
- Do not show immediate results, but work slowly over time.
- Should be taken daily, even when you are not having symptoms.

Remember

Take your medicines as directed by your doctor, and you:

- May have more days without asthma symptoms.
- Won't use quick-relief medications as often.
- Will have fewer symptoms at night.
- Will breathe better.
- May avoid permanent lung function changes/damage.