

First Aid For Asthma

WHAT IS AN ASTHMA ATTACK?

People with asthma have extra-sensitive airways. Triggers like dust, pollens, animals, tobacco smoke and exercise may make their airways swell and narrow, causing *wheeze, cough and difficulty breathing*

- 1 Sit the person comfortably upright. Be calm and reassuring.
- 2 Give 4 puffs of a blue **Reliever** inhaler (puffer) - Ventolin, Airomir, Bricanyl, or Asmol.
Relievers are best given through a **spacer**, if available. Use 1 puff at a time and ask the person to take 4 breaths from the spacer after each puff. Use the person's own inhaler if possible. If not, use the First Aid Kit inhaler or borrow one from someone.
- 3 Wait 4 minutes. If there is no improvement, give another 4 puffs.
- 4 If little or no improvement,
CALL AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY (DIAL 000)
and state that the person is having an asthma attack.
Keep giving puffs every 4 minutes until the ambulance arrives.
Children: 4 puffs each time is a safe dose.
Adults: up to 6-8 puff every 5 minutes may be given for a severe attack while waiting for the ambulance.

WITH SPACER



- ▲ Shake inhaler and insert mouthpiece into spacer.
- ▲ Place spacer mouthpiece in person's mouth and fire 1 puff.
- ▲ Ask the person to breathe in and out normally for about 4 breaths.
- ▲ Repeat in quick succession until 4 puffs have been given.

WITHOUT SPACER



- ▲ Shake inhaler.
- ▲ Place mouthpiece in person's mouth. Fire 1 puff as the person inhales slowly and steadily.
- ▲ Ask the person to hold that breath for 4 seconds, then take 4 normal breaths.
- ▲ Repeat until 4 puffs have been given.

WHAT IF IT IS THE FIRST ATTACK OF ASTHMA?

- ▲ If someone collapses and appears to have difficulty breathing, **CALL AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY** whether or not the person is known to have asthma.
- ▲ Give four puffs of a Reliever and repeat if no improvement.
- ▲ Keep giving 4 puffs every 4 minutes until the ambulance arrives.
- ▲ No harm is likely to result from giving a Reliever to someone who does not have asthma.
- ▲ *For more information on Asthma, contact your local Asthma Foundation 1800 645 130*
- ▲ *For more copies of this chart, contact the National Asthma Council 1800 032 495*

