

Parents,

Congratulations! Your child has successfully completed the AIMS program (modules 1-7) and has been introduced to basic asthma management skills; early warning signs, triggers, actions of their medications, use of the Asthma Control Test, In-Check Dial technique, as well as some fun puzzles, books, etc. on asthma.

The goal of the Elementary level AIMS program at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade level was to prepare them to transition safely into the middle school setting. In middle school, the campus nurse will further help them develop the necessary skills toward eventual self-carry of their asthma quick relief inhaler. These skills become more critical as they engage in outside school activities and participate in off-campus events during the middle and high school years. This process will continue to improve disease management skills, which, can result in improved asthma control and a normal quality of life so students with asthma can participate fully in *all* desired activities, now, and into adulthood.

Self-carry can safely be achieved when the maturity level of the student AND disease management skills are both in place. The American Lung Association has developed a tool to help in this process of determining skills 'readiness'. Over the summer, please work with your child on the questions below. This will reinforce the skills learned this previous year, identify any areas of weakness to improve, and prepare them for eventual self-carry status as they progress through their middle school years. Campus Nurse \_\_\_\_\_

## Questionnaire: Assessing Student Readiness to Self-Carry

Having immediate access to quick relief medicine is critical for people with asthma. The purpose of this tool is to create a standardized process for designated school personnel to use in order to determine a child's readiness to self-carry a quick relief inhaler during the school day. This assessment takes place once the student, the parent, and provider have agreed that the student is ready to self-carry. There are four areas of competencies that designated school personnel should assess at the beginning of each school year for each student with a diagnosis of asthma. Each of the four areas of knowledge and skills has a series of questions to ask the student and possible responses. Use this tool to help you identify student's capabilities and areas that need improvement. Make a plan to work with the student throughout the school year to build the knowledge and skills to self-carry and use a quick relief inhaler during the school day.

For more information, see the American Lung Association's course, "Assessing a Student's Readiness to Carry and Use a Quick Relief Inhaler" at <http://lung.training>

### Point values are:

Does not understand = **0** points

Somewhat understands = **5** points

Completely understands = **10** points

Final Score = (Sum of Points from all Answered)

### Evaluation Guidelines:



< 70

Not Ready



70 - 105

Almost Ready



105 >

Ready

## Section 1: Basic Understanding of Asthma

The student should have a basic understanding of asthma.

Question	Does Not Understand <b>0</b>	Somewhat Understands <b>5</b>	Completely Understands <b>10</b>
What part of your body is affected by asthma? Can you show me? What is this part of the body called? <i>The lungs.</i>			
What do the lungs do? <i>They help you breathe. They move air in and out of the body.</i>			
What happens to your lungs when you're having symptoms? <i>It's hard to breathe; the muscles squeeze tight; the insides of the airways swell; the airways fill with mucus.</i>			
What can you do to keep from getting asthma symptoms? <i>Avoid or limit exposure to the things that bother your lungs; taking daily controller medicines as prescribed by doctor.</i>			
What does it mean to have asthma under control? <i>I would not have symptoms when I do the things I want to do; I could do anything that my friends without asthma can do.</i>			

## Section 2: Understanding of Symptoms and Asthma Management

Recognizing signs and symptoms can help people with asthma take the necessary steps to prevent an asthma episode. The student should be able to recognize asthma symptoms and the steps to treat them.

Question	Does Not Understand <b>0</b>	Somewhat Understands <b>5</b>	Completely Understands <b>10</b>
<p>What are the signs you have before your asthma symptoms begin?</p> <p><i>Most people have early warning signs that may occur hours before symptoms appear, such as: feeling tired; needing to clear throat often; sore or itchy throat; dry mouth; fever; feeling nervous, grumpy, or upset; rapid heartbeat; stuffy nose or head; restlessness; rubbing chin or throat repeatedly.</i></p>			
<p>What are your asthma symptoms?</p> <p><i>Asthma symptoms vary from one person to the next but may include: coughing; wheezing; feeling of tightness in the chest.</i></p>			
<p>What should you do if you are having asthma symptoms?</p> <p><i>Response should include: notifying an adult; taking asthma medicine; resting; doing relaxation exercises.</i></p>			

## Section 3: Using Asthma Medications

Understanding and using asthma medicines is a critical component to the overall treatment of asthma. The student should be able to describe the medicine they use to treat their asthma and demonstrate correct inhaler technique.

Question	Does Not Understand <b>0</b>	Somewhat Understands <b>5</b>	Completely Understands <b>10</b>
<p>Describe your asthma medications and how to use them.</p> <p><i>Use this as an opportunity to verify that the student understands the different types of medicines to treat asthma [i.e., long-term control medicine vs. quick-relief medicine]. Response should include: the names of the medicines they take to treat their asthma, how much to take, and when to take them. Refer to the student's asthma action plan for their individualized treatment plan.</i></p>			
<p>Demonstrate how to use your quick-relief medication and after care.</p> <p><i>Response should include a series of steps. Refer to the <a href="#">metered-dose inhaler video</a> or <a href="#">download instructions</a>.</i></p>			
<p><i>(Optional, will not affect score if not used)</i> Demonstrate how to use long-term control medication and after care.</p> <p><i>Response should include a series of steps. Refer to the <a href="#">American Lung Association's asthma medication page</a> to identify the correct inhaler and coordinating instructions.</i></p>			
<p>What does it mean if you use your quick-relief medicine more than twice per week? Who should you tell and why?</p> <p><i>It means my asthma is not in good control. I should tell my parents and the school nurse, so we can tell the doctor and get the help I need to be active and healthy.</i></p>			

## Section 4: Avoiding or Limiting Asthma Triggers

Managing exposure to triggers can greatly reduce the need for asthma medicines. The student should be able to articulate their asthma triggers and strategies to avoid or limit their exposure to them.

Question	Does Not Understand <b>0</b>	Somewhat Understands <b>5</b>	Completely Understands <b>10</b>
<p>Can you show me (by pointing to a trigger graphic) the things that make breathing difficult for you?</p> <p><i>Asthma triggers vary from person to person but may include: respiratory infections such as a cold; exercise; irritants; allergens; smoke from tobacco, wood, or car exhaust; changes in weather; and/or strong emotions. Refer to <a href="https://www.lung.org/asthma/triggers">lungs.org/asthma/triggers</a> for more details.</i></p>			
<p>What can you do about [trigger] to avoid it or limit your time near it?</p> <p><i>Managing exposure to triggers can greatly reduce the need for asthma medicines. For example, if the trigger is cold air, an appropriate response may be wearing scarf over your nose and mouth to warm the air you breathe in. If the trigger is exercise, an appropriate response may be to take quick-relief medicine before exercise.</i></p>			