If you have a child with special health needs, going back to school can be stressful, but there are some things you can do before the start of the school year to make the experience a great one.

**MAKE A SUMMER APPOINTMENT**

During the summer, meet with your child’s pediatrician to outline your child’s health needs and emergency plan. According to the American Academy of Pediatricians, the document should contain:

- A brief medical history of your child.
- Medicine or other types of care required during the school day. For example, does your child need to check his or her blood sugar, take insulin, or use an asthma inhaler?
- Special dietary needs.
- Possible problems or special precautions. For example, does your child have limitations when it comes to physical activity?
- Your pediatrician’s name and contact information.
- Emergency plans and procedures (including whom to contact).
- A consent form allowing your child’s doctor to talk to the school and vice versa.

It can be overwhelming to share this information with your child’s school, but the better informed the staff is, the more prepared they will be to help your child have the best experience possible.

**MEET WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Before the start of the year, organize a meeting with school health staff, your child’s primary teacher, and your child (if old enough).

During this meeting, develop a written, legal document outlining the services your child will need. The school can provide you with a 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Program form that can act as another resource for teachers and staff.
As the school year progresses, it will be important to review and update your child’s plan. Meet with your child’s teachers regularly to discuss your child’s needs and progress. Address any issues or concerns that have arisen, such as numerous absences or falling behind, to determine next steps.

**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

**PEOPLE WITH MODERATE TO SEVERE ASTHMA**

This information is based on what we currently know about the spread and severity of the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

**RISK OF SEVERE ILLNESS FROM COVID-19**

People with moderate to severe asthma may be at risk of a more serious case of COVID-19 should they contract it. COVID-19 can affect your respiratory tract (nose, throat, lungs), increase your risk of an asthma attack, and possibly lead to acute respiratory disease and pneumonia.

**TREATMENT**

There is currently no specific treatment for or vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure to the virus.

**PREPARE FOR COVID-19**

- Stock up on supplies.
- Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others.
- Clean your hands often by washing with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid crowds and people who are sick.
- Avoid non-essential travel.
- During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible to further reduce your risk of exposure.
- If someone in your home is sick, take extra care disinfecting surfaces, separating food and toiletries, and in serious cases, encourage them to self-isolate.

**FOLLOW YOUR ASTHMA ACTION PLAN**

- Continue taking your current medications, including any inhalers with steroids (corticosteroids) in them.
- Don’t stop any medications or change your asthma treatment plan without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- Discuss any concerns about your treatment with your healthcare provider.
- Talk to your healthcare provider, insurance company, and pharmacist about creating an emergency supply of your prescriptions, such as your inhaler.
- Make sure you have a 30-day supply of non-prescription medications and supplies on hand should you need to stay at home for a long time.
- Avoid your asthma triggers.
- Strong emotions can trigger an asthma attack, so it is important that you take steps to cope with possible stress and anxiety.

**CLEAN AND DISINFECT THINGS YOU OR YOUR FAMILY TOUCH FREQUENTLY**

If possible, have someone who doesn’t have asthma do the cleaning and disinfecting. While using cleaning and disinfecting products, make sure:

- People with asthma are not in the room.
- Disinfectants used will not trigger an asthma attack.
- Windows and doors are open where possible, and fans are blowing air outside.

**HOLD INVENTORIES OF ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES**

- Personal protection equipment, such as masks.
- Medication (including inhalers), dietary supplements, vitamins, and other prescription medications.
- Toiletries.
- Cleaning and disinfecting products, make sure:
  - Surfaces like phones, remotes, tables, doorknobs, light switches, counter tops, desks, keyboards, etc. are cleaned and disinfected daily.
  - Instructions on product labels are followed.
  - Products are sprayed onto a cloth or paper towel instead of directly on a surface (as allowed by label).

If you have symptoms, contact your healthcare provider to find out what you should do. If your symptoms are severe, get medical attention immediately.

**How to Use a Face Mask**

Always wear a mask when around others, but especially when you are near or caring for a person with flu-like symptoms. Make sure you use a new or properly sterilized mask and use proper handwashing and social distancing hygiene practices.

**Putting on a mask**

- Ensure you are using a clean mask.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer before use.
- Pick up the mask by touching ear loops (or ties) only.
- Avoid touching the mask itself.
- Hold both ear loops and place a loop around each ear; or if using ties, secure them tightly around the head, leaving no gaps.
- Fit the mask around your mouth, nose, and chin.

**While wearing a mask**

- Your mask should be either completely on or off; do not wear it on or rest it under your chin.
- Never wear a mask inside-out.
- Remove your mask if soiled or damp; do not reuse a single-use mask.
- Do not touch your mask, face, or adjust the mask while it is on.

**Avoid sharing personal household items such as cups and towels.**

**Avoid your asthma triggers.**

**Discard the mask in an appropriate receptacle allowed by label.**

**If you touch your mask, wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer right away.**

**Always follow social distancing and good hygiene practices.**

**Removing a mask**

- Grab ear loops only and lift the mask off ears, and chin.
- Use a new or properly sterilized mask.
- Do not touch your mask, face, or adjust the mask when removing.

**How TO CLEAN REUSABLE CLOTH MASKS**

**Washing machine**

- To wash, launder the mask often in your washing machine in HOT water (160°F) using soap or detergent that leaves no residue.
- Rinse well with fresh water and hang to air-dry.

**Hand washing**

- You may choose to disinfect masks by soaking for five minutes in a solution of two tablespoons of bleach per quart (liter) of water or 1/3 cup (80ml) of bleach per gallon (3.84 liter) of water.
- Rinse well with fresh water and hang to air-dry.
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