**Why it's worth going to your asthma review**

An asthma review is a great opportunity to make sure you're getting the right treatment for your asthma. It could help you keep free of symptoms.

This is your chance to ask questions about anything that's worrying you. For example, you can ask about any triggers or symptoms you're noticing. And you can check that you're using your inhaler correctly.

Even if you're feeling well with your asthma go to your review. It's a chance to make sure your asthma stays well, so you can carry on with doing the things you enjoy.

And it could be that you'll be able to cut down your asthma medicines.

At your asthma review you can:

* Review your asthma medicines to make sure they're still working well for you
* Have tests like spirometry and peak flow to see how well your lungs are working
* Talk through any symptoms bothering you or triggers you've noticed
* Talk to your GP or asthma nurse about cutting down your asthma medicines (if you've had no symptoms and haven't needed your reliever inhaler for three months)
* Check you're taking your inhaler in the right way so the medicine ends up in your lungs where it's needed
* Update your written asthma action plan
* Ask about other things that might help your asthma such as stop smoking support and starting to exercise.

**How to make the best of your asthma review**

Here are some ideas to help you prepare for your appointment so you can get the best out of it.

**Before you go**

Write down any questions you want to ask. For example:

* Am I on the right dose of medicine?
* Is this the best inhaler for me?
* How can I cope with triggers?
* What do I do if symptoms get worse?
* How can I get into a good routine with my asthma medicines?
* Can I get stop smoking support?

**Keep a note of any symptoms**

Every day, make a note of how you feel, and whether you've noticed any triggers. Write down whether or not you've taken your medicines as prescribed. You can take this record along to your appointment. It will help your asthma nurse get a clearer idea of how your asthma's been.  Write down anything you think might be a symptom, even if you're not sure. You'll be able to talk about whether it's anything to do with your asthma or not, and what you can do about it. When you have symptoms, take a video of yourself on your phone. Or you could ask someone else to film you.  If you don't have symptoms on the day of your appointment, having a video can help. Showing your nurse a video tells them what your symptoms have been like straight away. It means you don't have to try describing them.

**Take along all your inhalers and spacers**

Your asthma nurse can check your inhaler technique. Even a small tweak to the way you take your inhalers can make a big difference to how much asthma medicine is getting to your lungs.

**Take along your asthma action plan**

Your annual asthma review is a great time to look through your asthma action plan and make any changes. For example, if the GP changes your medicines they can write it down on your action plan. Don't worry if you don't have an action plan yet.

**At your appointment**

Be open about anything that could be making your asthma worse.

For example, if you keep forgetting to take your inhaler, or don't take it because you're worried about side effects, talk about it to your GP or asthma nurse. They can find ways to support you.

It helps your GP to know if you smoke, so be honest. Smoking can make your asthma worse, and stop your asthma medicines working so well.

Ask your GP or asthma nurse how you can make some changes to help your health. They can help you with quitting smoking. They can also give you advice about weight loss.

It's also good to be open about any complementary therapies you've tried. Sometimes complementary medicines can interfere with your asthma treatment, so it's really useful for your GP or asthma nurse to know about it.

**Ask questions**

This is your chance to get information about your asthma and the best way to look after it, so ask as many questions as you need to.

Don't be afraid to ask your GP or asthma nurse to repeat anything you don't understand. You could say something like: "I'm not quite sure I heard what you said about X. Would you mind going over it again?"

Don’t leave your asthma review without

* An updated written asthma action plan
* Answers to your questions and concerns
* Knowing what medicines to take and why
* Feeling confident you're using your inhaler(s) and spacer in the right way