

# Winter & kid's asthma: High time for flare-ups

December 21 2022, by Cara Murez

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Cold, dry winter air and a trio of spreading viruses could cause children's

asthma to flare up this winter season.

But [experts](#) at one children's hospital offer some tips to help parents keep their kids' worrisome respiratory symptoms in check.

While [asthma](#) is a lung condition that can make it harder to breathe, some things can make symptoms worse, such as illness, [cold air](#) and smoke, according to Children's Minnesota in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

To avoid cold-weather flare-ups, make sure your [child](#) has the right clothing to wear outside, including a scarf or neck warmer they can wear over their mouth and nose. This can help warm and humidify the air they breathe.

Help prevent a case of influenza by washing hands frequently and making sure your child gets a flu shot.

The flu can lead to hospitalization in children with asthma. People with asthma have swollen, sensitive airways already, so they're more likely to have serious health complications such as pneumonia if they get the flu. The [influenza virus](#) can trigger asthma symptoms even in mild asthma or cases that are well-controlled by medication.

Teach your children how to wash their hands properly with soap and water, while still encouraging them to keep their hands away from their face.

A [flu shot](#) doesn't guarantee prevention of 100% of flu symptoms but can limit the severity and duration of the infection. It may also reduce the risk of hospitalization.

Never allow smoking in the home or car because this can trigger an asthma flare. Secondhand smoke can harm the lungs. It can cause long-

term breathing problems and make existing breathing problems worse.

Always carry your child's quick-relief medications. Have your child take a preventive dose of their quick-relief medicine before heading outside. Use it during an asthma flare-up.

These medicines work fast, but their effects are short-term and they don't cure asthma.

Have an asthma action plan to prepare for flare-ups in all seasons. You can work with your child's doctor to tailor a plan for your child, Children's Minnesota recommends.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [asthma](#).

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