

HOW TO RECOGNISE AN ASTHMA ATTACK

- It is important to be able to recognise the signs and symptoms of an asthma attack in a child who is in your care.
- Be aware that an asthma attack can appear gradually over a few days.
- Early recognition is important to help prevent the child 's asthma getting worse.

A child may have one or more of these symptoms during an asthma attack:



BREATHING HARD AND FAST

You may notice the child breathes faster or you may see the chest pull inwards with each breath because the muscles around the collarbone or in between or underneath the ribs pull inwards. Also watch out for flaring of the nostrils.



NOISY BREATHING OR WHEEZING

Listen for sounds like grunting or wheezing. Wheeze is a high-pitched whistling noise heard when breathing in or out. This sound is produced because the airways have become inflamed and narrowed.



COUGHING

The child may have a worsening cough. This may be worse at night and may prevent the child from having restful sleep.



BREATHLESSNESS

The child may appear less active, they may refuse to eat or they might even be restless. This could be a sign that they are too breathless to run around, eat or even sleep. The child may not be able to speak in full sentences.



TUMMY OR CHEST ACHE

Often in younger children they may complain of tummy ache when it is actually their chest which is causing the discomfort.



INCREASED USE OF THEIR RELIEVER INHALER

The child may ask for their reliever inhaler more frequently during an asthma attack.



CLAMMY SKIN

Feel the child's skin to see if it is cool but also sweaty. The head may be sweaty while the skin feels cool or clammy.



PALE OR BLUISH SKIN COLOUR

Check around the lips, eyes, hands and feet, especially the nail beds.