

factfile

Football & Asthma



'I always make sure that I take my inhaler before playing football and that I have it available in case I need it.'

PAUL SCHOLES, FOOTBALLER

1 in **11**
children has
asthma in the UK

Football & Asthma

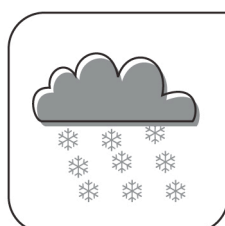
This factfile covers:

- Top tips to manage your asthma while playing football
- What to do in an asthma attack
- Where can I get more information?

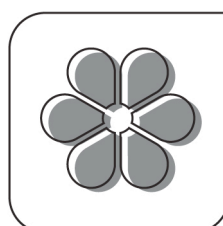
Common triggers:
Cold air & pollen

This factfile is to help you support children and young people with asthma to help them achieve their full potential. Many coaches and youth club organisers are concerned about working with children with asthma as they are worried about the effects of asthma medicines and the risk of an asthma attack. By following these simple steps you will enable any child with asthma to participate as much as they are able and give them the confidence that they are being looked after by an informed professional.

The main worry for children and young people with asthma playing football is the effect of cold air as this may cause the muscles around the airways to tighten, making breathing more difficult. To minimise the effect of cold air ensure that everyone is warmed up thoroughly and that they have taken their inhaler beforehand.



Cold air



Pollen



Football & Asthma

Top tips to manage your asthma while playing football

- If football makes a child's asthma worse always ensure that they use their reliever inhaler (usually blue) immediately before they warm up.
- Always start your session with warm up exercises.
- Try to avoid the things that trigger their asthma (eg, smoke, pollen).
- Ensure that the child always has their reliever (blue) inhaler with them.
- If they have asthma symptoms when they are playing, ensure they stop, take their reliever inhaler and wait five minutes or until they feel better before starting again.
- If a child has to sit out for five minutes try to involve them as much as possible for example by getting them to take notes on the match or training or getting them to do some ball work (if they are feeling well enough to do so).
- Always end your session with warm down exercises.
- Make sure you know which children have asthma.
- Ensure the children all have an asthma attack card with them. This is especially important while playing football and is a reminder for the child and those around them about what to do if they are experiencing severe asthma symptoms.

Contact Asthma UK's Supporter & Information Team (info@asthma.org.uk; 0800 121 62 55) to receive your free copy.

What to do in an asthma attack

1. Give the child their reliever inhaler (usually blue), immediately
2. Encourage the child to sit up and ensure that any tight clothing is loosened
3. If there is no immediate improvement during an attack, continue to give the child one puff of their reliever inhaler every minute for five minutes or until symptoms improve. If their symptoms do not improve in five minutes – or if you are in doubt – call 999 or a doctor urgently. The child should continue to take one puff of reliever every minute until help arrives.

If a child is having any problems during a football session always let their parents know as they may need to visit their doctor or asthma nurse for an asthma review.





Asthma UK Adviceline

Ask an asthma
nurse specialist

0800 121 62 44

asthma.org.uk/adviceline

Asthma UK website

Read the latest independent
advice and news on asthma

asthma.org.uk

Asthma UK publications

Request booklets, factfiles
and other materials with
independent, specialist
information on every
aspect of asthma

0800 121 62 55

info@asthma.org.uk

Asthma UK membership

Become a member of
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a year

0800 121 62 55

membership@asthma.org.uk

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