

## Asthma Medicines

There are two types of medicines used to treat asthma: bronchodilators and anti-inflammatories.

**Bronchodilators (RELIEVERS):** relax and open the airways during an asthma attack. This makes it easier for you to breathe.

Bronchodilators come in two types:

- **Short-acting bronchodilators:**
  - Quickly open the airways to relieve asthma symptoms.
  - Are most commonly used as an inhaler but are also available as a pill, liquid, nebulizer, and shots.
  - Work fast and have the fewest side effects when used in inhaler form.
- **Long-acting bronchodilators:**
  - Must be used every day to work well.
  - Will not quickly stop sudden asthma symptoms. Long-acting bronchodilators are available in inhaler and pill forms and are typically used twice a day.

**Anti-inflammatories (PREVENTERS)--** help reduce or prevent the swelling and inflammation in your airways making it easier to breathe. Anti-inflammatory asthma medications are:

- The most important medicine your doctor will use to prevent the symptoms of asthma.
- Must be used every day on a regular schedule to work well.
- Are usually prescribed when your asthma symptoms occur more than one or two times a week.
- Best given through an inhaler.

**Other medicines:** There are other kinds of medicines your doctor may give you to help prevent asthma attacks. These medicines include:

- Antihistamines (for allergies)
- Nasal steroids (for allergies or sinus problems)
- Acid reducing medications (for heartburn or reflux).

These medicines do not open your airways or prevent swelling and inflammation in the lungs, but can help prevent symptoms that may trigger your asthma attacks.

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