

# Asthma Pharmacies

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Breathing  
just got  
easier



Utah Asthma Task Force  
[www.health.utah.gov/asthma](http://www.health.utah.gov/asthma)

## Mission

To assist people with asthma in improving their quality of life by providing the tools and resources necessary to maximize and promote wellness at asthma-friendly pharmacies.

## Objectives

1. To increase patient awareness of how asthma affects daily activities
2. Increase patient ownership in their individual treatment plans by teaching proper inhaler technique and encouraging compliance to medication regimen
3. Improve patients access to asthma management systems
4. Improve continuity of care

## Utah Asthma Task Force

Program Development Participants:  
American Lung Association of Utah  
Association of Utah Community Health (AUCH)  
Utah Department of Health (UDOH) Asthma Program  
UDOH Diabetes Program  
GlaxoSmithKline  
Utah Medicaid Program  
Intermountain Healthcare  
Primary Children's Medical Center  
Jolley's Pharmacy  
University of Utah's College of Pharmacy  
Utah Medicaid Transformation Grant  
UDOH Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

*Utah communities working together to improve the quality of life for people with asthma.*

## Why Asthma-Friendly Pharmacies . . .

The Utah Asthma Task Force works to improve the quality of life of those with asthma. One aspect of improving quality of life is to improve the management of asthma. Pharmacists participating on the Utah Asthma Task Force presented the idea of implementing expanded asthma education at the pharmacy to help patients understand and manage asthma better. The Utah Asthma Task Force researched and studied similar programs across the country and used the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's Asthma Diagnosis and Management Guidelines to create this program.

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) Guidelines state that asthma self-management education is essential to provide patients with the skills necessary to control asthma and improve outcomes. Asthma self-management education should be integrated into all aspects of asthma care, and requires repetition and reinforcement. According to the NAEPP Guidelines patient education should:

- Begin at the time of diagnosis and continue through follow-up care
- Involve all members of the health care team
- Introduce the key education messages by the principal clinician, and negotiate agreements about the goals of treatment, specific medications, and the action patient will take to reach the agreed-upon goals to control asthma
- Reinforce and expand key messages (e.g., the patient's level of asthma control, inhaler techniques, self-monitoring and use of a written asthma action plan) by all members of the health care team
- Occur at all points of care where health professionals interact with patients who have asthma, including clinics, medical offices, EDs, pharmacies, homes and community sites (e.g., schools, community centers)

The Guidelines also stress the importance of self management:

- Asthma self-management education should occur at multiple points of care. Evidence is now abundant that asthma self-management education is effective in improving outcomes of chronic asthma. Specific training in self-management skills is necessary to produce behavior that modifies the outcomes of chronic illnesses such as asthma
- The ultimate goal of both expert care and patient self-management is to reduce the impact of asthma on related morbidity, functional ability, and quality of life. The benefits of educating people who have asthma in the self-management skill of self-assessment, use of medications and action to prevent or control exacerbation, include reduction in urgent care visits and hospitalizations, reduction of asthma-related health care costs, and improvement in health status.



Studies of pharmacy-based education directed toward understanding medications and teaching inhaler and self-monitoring skills show the potential of using community pharmacies as a point of care for self-management education.

The Asthma-Friendly pharmacy program goes above and beyond what pharmacists are already required to do by:

- Utilizing asthma friendly-pharmacists to provide reinforcement of self-management techniques at regularly scheduled appointments.
- Providing face-to-face, individualized education sessions with the patient. Education will be in a separate counseling area away from the counter to provide privacy. The pharmacist will provide education on the diseases processes, elements of control, inhaler technique and trigger avoidance.
- Pharmacists providing comprehensive education on asthma and continued reinforcement of self-management techniques will assist patients to take personal ownership of their treatment plans.
- Keeping the pharmacist in contact with the physician to provide feedback on the interventions/education provided to the patient.
- Reinforcing education sessions throughout the year at one, three, six, 12 months.
- Pharmacist will be also addressing quality of life issues with each patient.

This program will allow pharmacists, who are an excellent resource to patients, an opportunity to take on a more active role in the health care team by providing them [the pharmacist] with the infrastructure to participate in patient education.