

Parent Letter Regarding Asthma Inhaler vs. Nebulizer during COVID-19

September 17, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Delaware Department of Education and Delaware Department of Health and Social Services' Division of Public Health offer the following information regarding practices related to COVID-19 and asthma management in schools.

Symptoms of asthma and COVID-19 may overlap, including cough and shortness of breath. Therefore, students experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, including cough and shortness of breath, should not attend school.

To manage students' asthma during this COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that students use inhalers with spacers (with or without face mask, according to each student's individualized treatment plan) over nebulizer treatments whenever possible. Based on limited data, use of asthma inhalers (with or without spacers or face masks) are not considered an aerosol-generating procedures.¹

Quick-relief medicine using a nebulizer is not recommended as a first option this school year due to potential increased risk of the transmission of COVID-19 by droplets that are expelled in the air. If your child requires nebulizer treatments, this should be discussed with the school nurse and your child's primary healthcare provider.² Additional information on managing asthma during COVID-19 may be found in the [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America's COVID-19 Asthma Toolkit for Schools](#).

As soon as possible, please let the school nurse know if your child has asthma, as well as your student's treatments, which may require quick-relief medicine during the school day to relieve symptoms. In preparation for the school year, please work with your student's doctor to provide:

- An updated written [Asthma Action Plan](#)
- An updated medication permission form for school use/self-use, as required.
- A quick-relief inhaler with spacer or valved holding chamber dedicated for school use

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your student's school nurse.

For more information on how to prepare for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year and stay up to date on COVID-19 visit [Lung.org/covid-19](#).

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). K-12 schools and childcare programs. FAQs for administrators, teachers and parents. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schoolschildcare/schools-faq.html>

² <https://www.lung.org/blog/back-to-school-with-asthma-during-covid>