



Peak Flow Meter-Description & Instructions

Description-what is a peak flow meter and why is it helpful?

A peak flow meter is a device that measure how well air moves out of your lungs. In asthma, symptoms occur due to airway narrowing which prevents air from moving out of the lungs. A peak flow meter can tell whether there is airway narrowing even when you do not feel symptoms. This is important because then you can treat yourself with medication which may stop an asthma attack from ever occurring.

Information obtained from peak flow monitoring can help both you and you doctor monitor and control your asthma. With peak flow meter we can:

- Learn what makes your asthma worse
- Decide if your treatment plan is working well
- Decide when to add, stop or change medications
- Decide when to seek emergency care

Instructions-how to use your peak flow meter?

Do the following 5 steps:

1. Move the indicator to the bottom of the numbered scale.
2. Stand up.
3. Take a deep breath, filling your lungs completely.
4. Place the mouthpiece in your mouth and close your lips around it. Do not put your tongue inside the hole.
5. Blow out as hard and fast as you can with a single blow.

Repeat steps 1-5 over again two more times and record the best of the three blows in an asthma diary. Do not record the number if you cough or make a mistake.

Finding your personal best peak flow and when to test your peak flow

Personal best peak flow is the highest number that you achieve over a two to three week period when your asthma is under good control (i.e. you do not have any symptoms).

To find your personal best peak flow number, take peak flow reading once a day for two to three weeks. Measure peak flow at the following times:

- Between noon and 2:00 p.m. everyday.
- After each time you take your short-acting relief inhaler.
- Any other time your doctor suggest.

Bring your asthma diary on the next visit and your doctor will set-up or update an asthma action plan for you. This will help determine how well your asthma is controlled and whether adjustments need to be made.

Maintenance-keeping track of your peak flow

Continue to measure peak flows when you wake up, before taking medicine. Record the number in your diary (on the back of this sheet) every day or as instructed by your doctor.