

Peak Flow Meter

Peak flow meter

When you have an asthma attack, the muscles in your airways tighten, causing the airways to narrow. The peak flow meter gives you an early warning that this is happening, sometimes hours or days before you have any asthma symptoms. This lets you know when you need to begin or increase the use of your asthma prevention inhaler. If you can use your prevention or maintenance inhaler before you feel symptoms of an asthma attack, it may help stop the narrowing of the airways and help you to avoid a severe asthma emergency and the need for your rescue inhaler.



ADAM.

How to use a peak flow meter:

- Move the marker to the bottom of the numbered scale.
- Stand up straight.
- Take a deep breath and fill your lungs all the way.
- Hold your breath while you place the mouthpiece in your mouth. Close your lips around it, being careful not to block the hole with your tongue.
- Blow out as hard and as fast as you can with one breath.
- Write down the number you get (if you coughed when you blew into the peak flow meter, repeat the test).

- Move the marker back to the bottom and repeat the test again. Your highest number is your peak flow number.

To figure out your normal peak flow number, take your peak flow every day for 2 to 3 weeks.

Your doctor can help you set your **green**, **yellow** and **red** zone on your peak flow meter. He will tell you what you need to do in each colored zone.

Once you know your normal number, set the markers on your peak flow meter.

- Your **green** zone should be 80% of your “best” score and up to your top number.
- Your **yellow** zone should be between 80% and 60% (Often, your doctor will have you use your inhaler if you are in your **yellow** zone).
- Anything below 60% is your **red** zone. If you are in your red zone, your doctor will usually recommend that you go to the nearest emergency room.

If you need to take your peak flow daily, a good way to remember is to combine it with another daily activity such as brushing your teeth.

If you have an asthma attack, it helps to take your peak flow number, so you know if your medicine is working.

