



Policy Document

Asthma Policy

Policy Rationale and Purpose

Asthma is a condition that affects the small airways (bronchioles) of the lungs. In asthma, the airways are more sensitive than normal. When the sensitive airways are exposed to a 'trigger' they overreact, resulting in an asthma attack. A variety of different trigger factors may lead to an asthma attack (for example, pollens, dust, dust mite, cigarette smoke, colds/flu or exercise) and these triggers differ from person to person.

During an asthma attack the airways narrow making it difficult to breathe. The narrowing is caused by constriction of the muscle in the walls of the airways, swelling the lining layer of the airways, or excessive production of mucus.

Symptoms of asthma commonly include:

- Wheezy breathing (a whistling noise from the chest)
- Cough (usually dry and irritating)
- Difficulty in breathing
- Tightness in the chest.

These symptoms are particularly likely to occur during or immediately after exercise. Many children and adolescents have mild asthma with very minor problems and rarely need medication. However, some gymnasts will need medications on a daily basis, and frequently require additional medications at the gym; (particularly as they will be exercising).

Policy Description

Parents of every gymnast at BTYC that has been diagnosed with Asthma by a medical practitioner will need to ensure that they have a current individual management plan and they must bring their Asthma Kit to every training session.

The individual asthma management plan must include the following:

- Any special features of the gymnast asthma (symptoms, triggers etc)
- Severity of the asthma or Previous Intensive Care (ICU) admissions

- Management, including medications when well, e.g. are they on a preventer or reliever
- Signs of deteriorating asthma
- Asthma First Aid Plan
- Name and contact number of parent/guardian and doctor

Individual Asthma Kits must be brought to each training session and given to the gymnast's coach. Asthma Kits should include the following:

- A container or small bag with the gymnast's name clearly written on it
- The gymnast's Asthma medication. Please ensure that the medication is not out of date or empty.
- A copy of the gymnast's Asthma Action Plan
- Telephone contact details for the gymnast's parents/guardian, doctor/medical service
- A second contact person in case the parents/guardians cannot be contacted
- A pen and a note book

The gymnast's individual management plan may need to be reviewed, in consultation with the gymnast's parents/carers and medical practitioner if the gymnast's condition changes, or immediately after a gymnast has a serious asthma attack at BTYC.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to:

- Provide all relevant information regarding the gymnast's asthma via the Asthma Action Plan.
- Inform the BTYC if their child's medical condition changes, and if relevant provide an updated emergency procedures plan.
- Ensure that their child has adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication (including reliever) at all times
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to staff as the need arises e.g. if asthma symptoms were present the previous night

Following Work Place Best Practice, BTYC have an emergency asthma kit, equipped with Ventolin and spacers. This kit is for use in emergencies only and not for general use. Most gymnasts with severe asthma can have their asthma controlled by taking regular medications.