

The Peak Flow Meter

What Is a Peak Flow Meter?

A peak flow meter is a hand-held device that you blow into to measure air flow through the air tubes.

What Does It Measure?

The peak flow meter measures how fast air moves out of the lungs during one quick, hard outward breath; this measurement is called the **Peak Expiratory Flow Rate**, or **PEFR**. Everyone's PEFR is different.

Why Use a Peak Flow Meter?

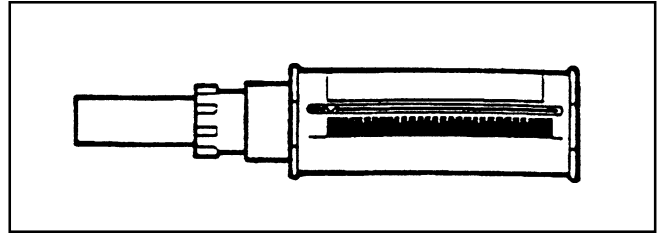
A peak flow meter is a tool you can use to be in charge of your child's asthma. Peak flow meters come in different shapes, but they all work the same way.

- It can help you tell whether your child's asthma is affecting their lungs and by how much, so you can take action. If your numbers are dropping, asthma is getting worse.
- When you call your health care provider during an asthma episode, you have a "number" or "score" to report instead of just a "feeling" about how tight your child's airways are.

Finding Your Scores

Work with your health care provider and follow the steps below to find your child's peak flow zones. Use these numbers for your Asthma Plan of Care.

First, find out your child's personal best peak flow by measuring their peak flow daily (or as prescribed by your health care provider) for one month. Keep a record on a calendar. Using your child's personal best score, figure out their green, yellow and red zones, as with the colors of a traffic light.



- **Green (normal zone):** Scores within 80-100 percent of their best score. This means their asthma is under control. Continue medicine plan.
- **Yellow (caution zone):** Scores within 50-80 percent of their best score. You need to check your plan to bring their asthma under control. This may mean changing their medicines and reducing triggers according to the plan agreed upon by you and your health care provider. You may plan to call your health care provider at this point.
- **Red (danger zone):** Scores less than half (50 percent) of their best peak flow. Call your health care provider right away.