



However, you should discuss these zones with your doctor because every person is different and your doctor may have a different recommendation for you.

Do I need to clean the peak flow meter?

It is important to clean your peak flow meter everyday, not only for hygienic reasons but also for accurate measurements. Dirt and other things such as mucus from colds or other respiratory infections may be in the device and give you an inaccurate measurement. To clean the peak flow meter, you should remove the mouthpiece from the meter and put both pieces in warm soapy water. Rinse and dry with a dried towel.

PEAK FLOW METER



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asthma
program

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



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What is a peak flow meter?

It is a convenient tool used to measure the amount of the airflow in the lungs. This device is very helpful for controlling asthma, and in determining what medication dosages you need. This device is also very easy to use. Even young children can use it to help control their asthma.

What are some of the benefits of using a peak flow meter?

Some of the important benefits of using a peak flow meter are:

- It allows you to detect early changes in the airflow.
- It can help you identify the triggering factors.
- The measurements can help determine if the treatment is working correctly or if any changes in medication or dosage are needed.
- It can help you avoid an asthma episode



How do I use a peak flow meter?

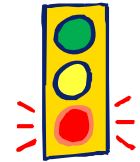
It is very easy to use a peak flow meter. Here are some simple steps:

1. Make sure that the sliding maker or indicator is reading zero.
2. Stand up or sit up straight.
3. Take a deep breath, filling up your lungs fully
4. Put the mouthpiece between your teeth and over your tongue and grip tightly with the lips. (Make sure that there is no gum or food in your mouth).
5. Blow out as much air as possible and as fast as you can.
6. Repeat procedures (1-5) two more times.
7. Record the highest of the three measurements.
8. Keep a log of your readings and discuss them with your doctor.

A valid measurement depends on the effort and technique used. You should make at least two measurements per day, one in the morning and the other one at night.

What do the measurements mean?

It is extremely important to understand your readings and know what to do if your readings change. You should work with your doctor or nurse to develop an asthma control plan, which will provide you with information about what to do with different peak flow meter measurements. Usually, there are three zones for the measurements: green zone, yellow and red zone. The American Lung Association describes these three zones as:



Green Zone:

The peak flow measurement is between 80 to 100% of your personal best. It means that your asthma is under control and you should take your regular daily dose of asthma medication.

Yellow Zone:

The peak flow measurements are between 50 to 80% of your personal best. Here, you should increase anti-inflammatory medications, take caution and use a rescue inhaler because the airways have narrowed. If there is no improvement after the medication, you should consult your doctor. You may notice some chest tightness and coughing.

Red Zone:

The peak flow measurements are 50% or less of your personal best. This is the danger zone and it predicts that a severe asthma episode is in progress. You need to have urgent treatment and you should call your doctor as soon as possible. You may have some difficulty talking, and bluish lips or fingernails.