

Increasing Access to Inhaled Medicines for COPD and Asthma

PATIENT STORIES

How do people living with COPD and asthma feel about inhaled medicines?

My Six-year-old Daughter's Struggle with Asthma

Insaaf Sadan
Cape Town, South Africa

Between 2021 and 2025, Imaan has had 18 hospital admissions for asthma. She would just start sneezing and her nose would start running and within 24 hours her chest would be completely closed.

She started school this year and in the beginning she missed a lot. In the first week she was admitted into high care and two weeks after that there was another asthma attack and she was in high care again. **For the first term she was only in school for 15 days.**

Imaan's attacks were so severe we sent her to school with a mask because we weren't sure what was triggering them. But almost nobody wears masks anymore and it made her very self-conscious. She was isolated from the other kids, sitting at a table with one other child and not on the rug.

We are very thankful and grateful that we have access to pumps. Imaan takes the pump in the morning and she takes it in the evening as a preventive.

Watching your child struggle to breathe is one of the scariest things. It's terrifying seeing your own child in that discomfort. **In that moment you are so dependent on the pump, which is why it is of utmost importance to know how to use it and when to use it.**

Making sure Imaan knows how to use the pump and the spacer is so important, although she's only six, because anything can happen to me. Everyone in the household needs to be educated and know how to support her.

You don't take chances with this. It's so important that you know where asthma can lead, the dangers of it. I don't take chances.

We've been very fortunate that the hospital is very welcoming to our children. **As soon as you bring your child in they triage and depending on the vitals they usually put the child on oxygen or the nebulizer or whatever is needed.** Children are assisted very quickly, especially when they are having an asthma attack.

Asthma is everywhere; it's global. I honestly wish that every child had access to spacers and pumps to make their lives so much easier.

For a long time we couldn't do things because Imaan's attacks were too severe, coming so often that we had to rush home or get the ambulance when we were on holiday and rush to the hospital. It really does affect your way of life. We were hostages in our own home and we couldn't go out. We couldn't enjoy anything.

In the last six months, Imaan has been doing better. **April this year was her last admission into hospital.** We are able to manage it better now. This has truly been her best Winter.



October 2025