

# Achieve

A Newsletter  
for AvMed  
Members

## ▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH ASTHMA

### How to clean your inhaler

If you've ever had an asthma attack, your inhaler is the first thing you reach for. But for that inhaler to work, it's critical to keep it clean. Dirt, bits of food, or clogged up medicine can block the opening, keeping the inhaler from spraying properly. Plus, a dirty inhaler can lead to a buildup of bacteria, mold, and debris, which can irritate your airways or even cause a respiratory infection. Here's a look at the main types of inhalers, plus cleaning tips for each.

**Metered-dose inhalers (MDIs)** have a plastic casing that holds a pressurized canister of

medicine. You may also use a spacer, a plastic tube placed between the MDI and your mouth.

- Every few days, take the canister out of the plastic casing and remove the mouthpiece cap.
- Wash the plastic casing and the cap with warm water and natural soap.
- Dry the casing, then put the canister back and perform a test dose.
- Wash your spacer in warm, soapy water, then dry it with a soft cloth.

**Dry-powder inhalers (DPIs)** are plastic disks

that release a mist of dry powder when you close your lips around the mouthpiece and take a deep breath.

- Wash the mouthpiece with a clean, dry cloth after each use.
- Don't use water — it may cause the powder inside the disk to clump.

**Slow-mist inhalers** are similar to MDIs, but they produce a fine mist that's propelled into your lungs.

- Every day or two, clean the mouthpiece, metal trim, and plastic casing with a damp cloth, then wipe dry.



## Ask the Asthma Doctor

**Q** How can I partner with my child's school to help manage his/her asthma?

**A** An asthma attack can happen anywhere — including at school. So you'll want to be sure that the staff can help.

Start with the paperwork. "It's really important to fill out the medical forms in partnership with your child's provider," says Theresa Guilbert, M.D. She's a spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics. "Be sure to include details such as the name, dose, and frequency of the rescue medication and when to give it." Take these steps:

**Share your child's management plan.** It details everything from a list of asthma triggers to the names and doses of

your child's medications. Create it with your doctor, then update it yearly, or whenever it changes.

**File a 504 plan.** All public schools are required to provide for kids with asthma. That includes things like giving your child time to take their medicine and training staff to help.

**Teach the teachers.** Show your child's teacher and other key staff how

to recognize an asthma attack and administer a rescue inhaler. And make sure the staff knows where to find your child's emergency supplies.

**Be prepared.** Provide medications for the school nurse, including inhalers and a peak flow meter. If your child is allowed to take their medication independently, make sure he or she always has an inhaler on hand.



### Case Manager Spotlight

**Donna Lynn** has been with AvMed for almost two years and a Registered Nurse for 22 years.

"My favorite thing about being a case manager is meeting our members where they are in life and being a part of their journey of managing their condition and achieving their health goals."

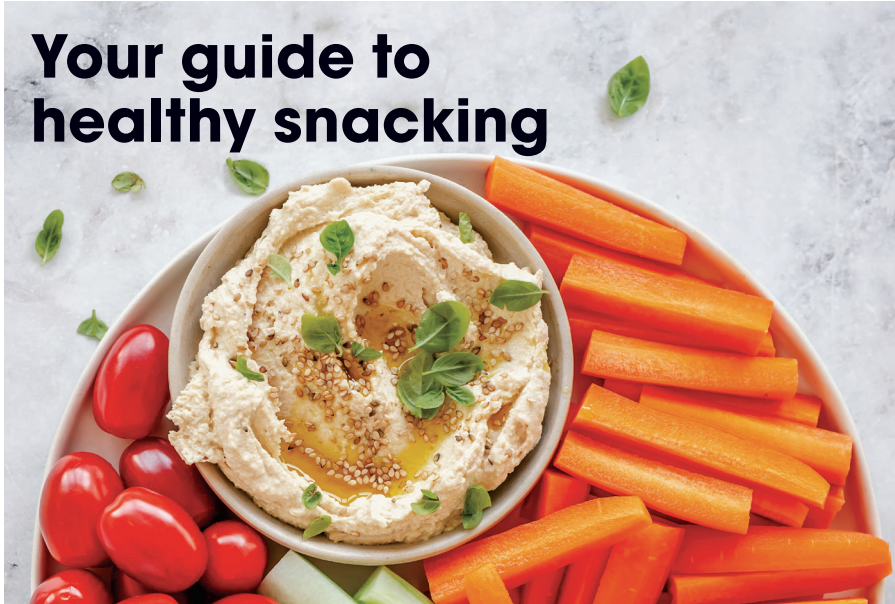




## Healthy Eating Made Simple

Elizabeth Ferrer, R.D., AvMed's Registered Dietitian, shares her favorite tips for happier, healthier meals — without feeling deprived.

### Your guide to healthy snacking



**Y**ou know you need three square meals a day — but what about snacks? The truth is snacks are not a mandatory part of a healthy diet.

In fact, if you're trying to lose weight, cutting out snacks can be a good place to start. But if you tend to get a bit hungry between meals, add a small snack (100 to 200 calories) so you're not starving (and prone to overeating) when your next meal comes around.

If you're trying to gain weight or are struggling to eat enough calories (for example, if you have COPD), adding high-calorie snacks (300 to 500 calories) like nuts, avocado, and Greek yogurt can help you meet your goals.

Snacks can also help if you have diabetes. Blood sugar-lowering medicines can cause hypoglycemia if you go too long without eating. Small snacks can help keep your blood sugar in range.

#### What to snack on?

Fiber and protein are the keys to a satisfying snack. These nutrients help keep you full. And, when paired with carbs — like fruit or crackers — they lessen the impact on blood sugar.

Look for packaged snacks that are lower in salt and added sugar. Trail mix, peanut butter crackers, or a granola bar are healthier options with protein and fiber.

Or try one of these simple, DIY snacks:

**½ cup cottage cheese  
+ ½ cup sliced peaches  
(120 calories)**

**¼ cup hummus  
+ ½ cup baby carrots  
(125 calories)**

**1 tbsp nut butter  
+ 1 apple (200 calories)**

#### Unencrypted email makes it easier to communicate with your case manager!

To opt in, scan the QR code with your phone. Log in or register to the member portal and select "Set My Preferences."



## Recipe



# Chocolate Peanut Butter “Nice Cream”

Serves 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes

Frozen bananas blend into an ice cream-like treat with no added sugar or dairy.

### Ingredients

2 ripe bananas, frozen  
2 tbsp no-salt-added peanut butter  
1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

### Nutrition Info

Calories 171 | Fat 9g (Sat Fat 2g) | Cholesterol 0mg | Sodium 5mg  
| Carbs 19g | Fiber 3g | Sugar 12g (inc. 0g Added Sugar) | Protein  
5g | Vit D 0µg | Calcium 15mg | Iron 1mg | Potassium 340mg

### Directions

Break the frozen banana into small pieces. Add to a food processor or blender with the peanut butter and cocoa powder. Blend until smooth. Serve immediately or freeze for later.

### TIP:

Got bananas that are past their prime? Bananas get sweeter and softer as they ripen, so those brown, overripe bananas are perfect for this recipe. Peel them and break them into small pieces, then stash them in the freezer for later.