As a patient with asthma, you have the right to:

1. Strive for complete control of your asthma*. Complete control of asthma means exactly what it sounds like: a life free of symptoms and limitations.

You should be aiming for:
- Zero symptoms
- Zero night-time awakenings
- Zero time lost from school, work and play
- Zero exercise limitations
- Zero emergency room visits
- Zero time spent in hospital because of asthma
- Zero side effects from asthma medications

*According to the guidelines of the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA): www.ginasthma.org
As a patient with asthma, you have the responsibility to:

1. Take an active role in managing your asthma with the support of your health-care team. For the most part, control of your asthma rests with you. You are the one managing it on a day-to-day basis.

2. Stay informed about asthma and know your numbers
   - How is your lung function? Peak flow measurements and spirometry are simple breathing or lung-function tests. Most children can do them by the age of six. Lung-function testing is a useful tool with which you and your health-care provider can assess the severity of your asthma. The results help determine the degree to which your asthma is controlled, and the type and amount of medication you need.
   - How much rescue medication do you use? Many people underestimate how often they have asthma symptoms. The amount of rescue medication you use is a good way to gauge your degree of asthma control. If you are using your reliever medication regularly, your asthma may not be controlled. You definitely should not need your reliever medication more than two times a week. If you are using it more often, consult with your doctor.

3. Take control
   - Take your medication. It sounds simple, but many people don’t take their medications properly. When used as prescribed, the asthma medications are safe and effective, so use them. If you’re not sure how, get help from your doctor, nurse, pharmacist or asthma educator.
   - Make and keep regular asthma appointments. Asthma is a chronic disease. One visit to a clinic or doctor’s office or emergency room is not going to ‘fix’ it. You need to see your doctor on a regular basis. How often you see your doctor depends on the severity of your asthma and level of asthma control. Make sure that each time you leave the office or clinic, your next appointment is booked.
   - Make emergency room visits unnecessary. With complete asthma control, no one with asthma should have to go to an emergency room (ER). That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t go to an ER if you feel you need to, but an ER visit is a sign of treatment failure. You and your primary-care doctor, perhaps with the