

## Asthma - Reactive Airway Disease

### Respiratory Distress

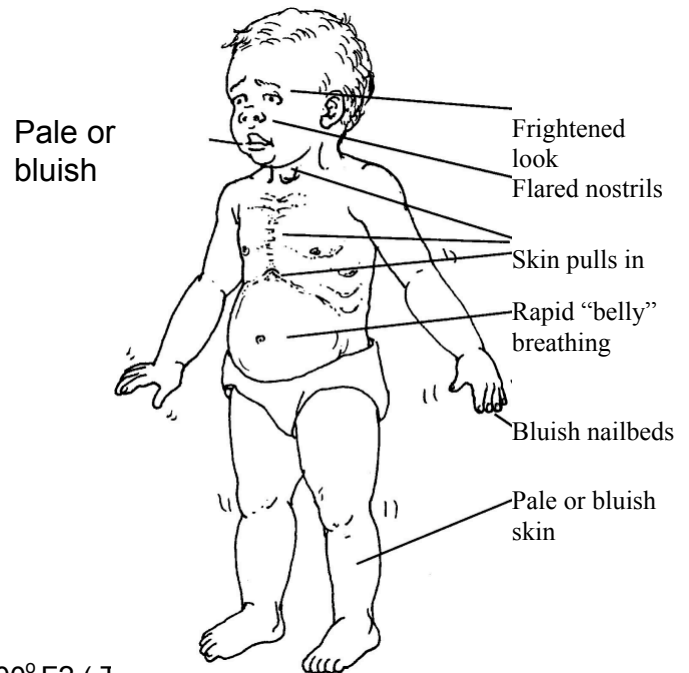
Respiratory Care Department

Respiratory distress is a general term to describe many symptoms related to breathing problems. The symptoms listed below mean that your child is not getting enough oxygen or is developing an infection. A child who has been born premature or has been hospitalized for respiratory problems may have these problems again.

#### WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

Call your child's doctor, 911, or take your child to the nearest emergency room if you see **any** of the following signs of respiratory distress.

- **Pale or bluish skin color**-Check around your child's eyes, lips, hands, and feet, especially the nailbeds.
- **Increased breathing rate**- Count your child's breaths for one (1) minute. Is he or she breathing faster than usual when he is quiet?
- **Retractions**- Check to see whether your child's chest pulls in with each breath, especially around the collarbone and around the ribs.
- **Nasal flaring**- Check to see if your child's nostrils widen when s/he breaths in.
- **Noisy breathing**- Listen for breathing that sounds like grunting, wheezing, or like mucus is in the throat.
- **Increase or change in color of mucus**- Check to see if your child has a lot of mucus from coughing or a runny nose. Green or yellow mucus could be a sign of infection.
- **Fever**- Take your child's temperature. Is it above 100° F? ( Take the temperature under the arm for infants and younger children; take it by mouth for older children.)
- **Clammy skin**- Feel your child's skin to see if it is cool and also sweaty.
- **Mood change**- Check to see if your child is more sleepy or fussy than usual, or "just not acting like her/himself."



Also check how well your child is eating. These signs tell a lot about how a child is feeling. Have this information ready when you call the doctor. It will help your doctor decide what to do for your child. It is important for you to stay calm, comfort your child, and reassure him.