



Asthma



Asthma is a disease that affects the airways in the lungs. It causes the airways to become sore and swollen when air moves in and out.

Breathing can be a challenge!

People with this disease have trouble because their airways become irritated causing mucus build-up. This mucus can block the airways, making it difficult for air to get through. Asthma is an even bigger challenge for children because their airways are much smaller.

Asthma Signs and Symptoms:

- Dry hacking cough, wheezing and tightness in chest
- Easily tired and out of breath
- Fast breathing when resting

**Asthma is usually worse at nighttime when lying down*

Managing your asthma now can help reduce future visits to the Emergency Room and hospital stays. **Discuss how to control your asthma with your doctor today.** Remember to tell your doctor about any changes in your health, no matter how minor or major. **This could save your life!**

When asthma symptoms become worse than usual, the airways tighten and narrow causing an asthma attack. A person may feel like he or she is breathing through a small straw or may not be able to breathe at all.

Asthma attacks are caused by:

- Allergies: animal hair, rodents, cockroaches, dust mites, mold, pollen from trees and grass
- Exercise (Exercised-Induced Asthma)
- Illness: common cold, flu
- Weather: cold air
- Irritants: perfume, scented items, smoke, chemicals

** DO NOT SMOKE!!! If you smoke, quit. This is the single best thing you can do to control asthma for you or your family member.*

Fortunately there are measures to help those with asthma live easier. It's important to talk with your primary care doctor to see which option is best for you or your family member.

Medications and Treatment:

- Long-Term Controller Medications: Taken daily, these help control chronic symptoms and reduce asthma attacks
- Quick-Relief Medications: Used to quickly prevent or treat an asthma attack and relieve short-term symptoms

Medications can be taken through inhalers, nebulizers, and pills. Again, based on a patient's age and preference, your primary care doctor will help find which one works best.

People with asthma can lead a normal life by reducing the causes of asthma attacks and using medications as prescribed by their doctor. Even when you feel well, always use medications correctly and keep your doctor appointments! If you need more information or have questions, please talk with your primary care doctor.

CALL 911 if someone is having an asthma attack and:

- their breathing is hard or they have fast breathing
- their lips and fingers turn blue
- they are unable to talk or walk
- there are signs of panic in the individual