

what is asthma?

Asthma is a chronic medical condition affecting a person's lungs causing shortness of breath, coughing, and wheezing. It is the most common reason for hospitalization in children, as well as school absences – on average 10 days a year. The severity of asthma can range from very mild to, in some instances, death. Although asthma is a disease that does not go away, it can be successfully managed by recognizing the signs and symptoms of an attack, knowing the triggers and taking the right medications.

asthma facts

- Approximately 25 million Americans have asthma.
- It is the leading chronic disease in children under the age 18 (5.1 million children diagnosed).
- Asthma is more common in boys than girls; however, it affects more adult women than men.
- In 2018, asthma was the cause of 1.6 million emergency room visits.

signs + symptoms

- Coughing
- Wheezing - Due to narrowing of the airways caused by muscle tightening and inflammation. This narrowing can also be called bronchoconstriction.
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath
- Increased mucous production

***In severe cases, airways can narrow significantly and quickly. It is important to recognize the early signs to prevent the need for hospitalization.



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Saturday & Sunday: Closed

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6770 NW 39th Expy Bethany, OK 73008

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asthma triggers



Dust Mites

Triggers: Body parts and droppings.

Where Found: Mattresses, bedding, carpeting, curtains, upholstered furniture, stuffed toys, etc. Dust mites are too small to be seen by the naked eye.



Mold

Triggers: Mold spores, fragments, and odors.

Where Found: Areas with more moisture such as kitchens, bathrooms, basements, as well as outside after rain. There are many types of mold and they can be found in any climate.



Pests

Triggers: Cockroaches--Body parts and droppings. Rodents--Fur, skin flakes, and urine.

Where Found: Areas with food and/or water such as kitchens, bathrooms, and basements.



Pets with Fur

Triggers: Fur, skin flakes, and saliva.

Where Found: Throughout home.



Secondhand Smoke/Vaping

Triggers: Smoke and/or chemicals released from cigarettes, pipes, cigars or vapes.

Where Found: Anywhere smoking is allowed.



Chemicals

Triggers: Chemical vapors that come from household items.

Where Found: Cleaning agents, deodorizers, air fresheners, perfumes, paints, nail polish, nail polish remover, etc.



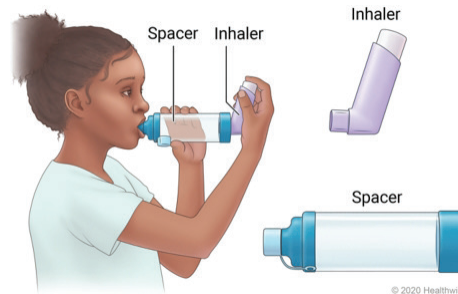
Exercise

Triggers: Loss of heat and/or water from the airway.

Ways to avoid:

- Warm up before exercise and allow cool down after.
- Give bronchodilator 15 minutes prior to exercise.
- Use a mask or scarf over mouth for cold weather.

medication administration



Step 1: Check the counter on the inhaler to ensure there are puffs/medication left to be given.

Step 2: Shake inhaler/canister to mix medication.

Step 3: Place inhaler into the back of the spacer.

Step 4: Have the child make a tight seal around the mouth piece (if the spacer has a mask, make a seal on the child's face).

Step 5: Administer 1 puff and have the child take 5-6 breaths using the spacer. If the spacer makes a whistling noise, instruct the child to breathe slower.

Step 6: If more puffs/medication is needed, shake inhaler/canister, and repeat steps 4 & 5.

***Spacers should be used because they increase the amount of medication going into the lungs by 80% - meaning more effective relief from the symptoms of an asthma attack.

rescue vs. maintenance medications

Asthmatics should always have a "rescue" medication available, such as albuterol, to treat the signs and symptoms of an onset of asthma attack. Rescue medications are extremely important during an asthma attack because they are fast acting and begin working in 5-15 minutes.

Maintenance medications are long acting and used for the prevention of asthma attacks. It is important for these medications to be taken daily even if there are no symptoms shown. They DO NOT provide immediate relief of an asthma attack.

***Medication should be given as directed by the physician or according to the asthma action plan. Increased use of rescue medications can be a sign of worsening asthma.

unmanaged asthma

Unmanaged asthma can be caused by a lack of education about the disease, how to manage it, triggers, and what to do during an attack. Other issues contributing to non-compliance can be home dynamics, forgetfulness, financial burdens, medication side effects, missed doctor's appointments, etc. Some children may feel embarrassed or different leading to medication not being taken when needed.

It takes a community to help asthmatic children and their families. We can all do our part in educating and providing support and resources. Together, we can do our part to prevent asthma related deaths.