

How is asthma treated?

There is no cure for asthma, but it can be controlled or managed. **The primary treatment for asthma is medication.** There are many medications available, and they can be classified into two categories: bronchodilator and anti-inflammatory. Bronchodilator medications induce the opening of the airways to make the person breathe easier. On the other hand, anti-inflammatory medications prevent asthma attacks from developing. Both of these medications come in many forms such as inhaler, liquid, pills, powder and shots.

How can asthma be managed?



- ✓ Each person should have an asthma management plan provided by a physician, and it should be followed carefully.
- ✓ It is also important to try to avoid those trigger factors that may cause an asthma attack.
- ✓ Take your medications as directed and monitor the response to determine if the treatment is working.
- ✓ Visit your doctor as your doctor recommends.

ASTHMA: basic information



asthma
program

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Asthma Facts:

- Asthma is the most common chronic disease in children.
- It affects people of all ages, races and ethnicities.
- Asthma kills about 5,000 people per year in the U.S.
- There are about 6 million children with asthma.
- Asthma is the number one cause of children missing school.
- In the past decade, there has been a dramatic increase in children with asthma, especially in children younger than five years of age.
- There are more than 9 million visits to health care providers and 1.9 million to emergency rooms per year.
- There are over 500,000 hospitalizations per year due to asthma attacks.

What is asthma?

Asthma is a chronic disease caused by the inflammation of the airways in the respiratory system. During an asthma episode, there is a swelling of the lining of the lungs and an excess of mucus production, which blocks the flow of air.

Even though asthma cannot be cured, it can be controlled. However, if asthma is left untreated, it can even cause death.

Although, asthma affects people of all ages, races, and social levels, studies have shown that most people affected have a family history of asthma, allergies, eczema. However, asthma could also be triggered by many other factors such as pollen, mold,

dust mites, and exposure to second hand smoke. It is helpful to determine the trigger patterns in your asthma episodes in order to avoid future attacks.

How is asthma classified:

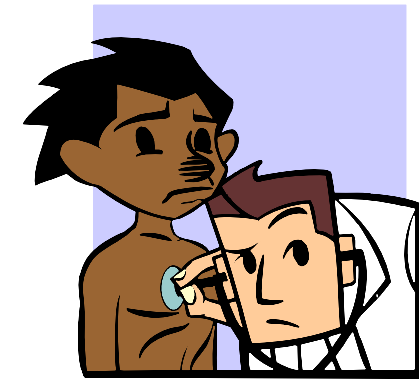
Asthma is classified according to the frequency of the symptoms. There are four types:

1. Mild intermittent
2. Mild persistent
3. Moderate persistent
4. Severe persistent

What are some of its trigger factors?

There are many factors that cause or trigger asthma and they vary among individuals. Some of the common factors are:

- Allergens:
 - Dust
 - Pollen
 - Medicines
 - Chemicals/fumes (e.g. paints, hair spray and air pollution)
 - Insects (e.g. cockroaches)
 - Molds
 - Pets
 - Foods (e.g. milk, nuts or eggs)
- Family history
- Premature birth may increase the risk
- Exposure to cigarette smoke
- Infections by virus such as the common cold
- Vigorous exercise
- Emotional stress (e.g. crying)
- Changes in weather



What are some of the symptoms of asthma

There are many symptoms, and they may vary by individual, type of asthma attack, and severity. They may also appear quickly and persist for a few hours. They include:

- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath
- Tightness in the chest, pain or pressure
- Persistent dry cough, especially at night or after physical activity

What happens during an asthma attack?

There is an excess of mucus produced, and the lining of the airways become swollen making the airways narrower. This constriction leads to difficulty in breathing. The severity may increase quickly. This is why it is important to treat as soon as you recognize it.