

Exercise:

- Ask your doctor about using medication before exercising.
- Adjust the exercise routine to your pace.
- Include warm up and cool down exercises.
- Breathe through your nose.
- Exercise inside the home during the cold weather.
- Swimming seems to be a good alternative.

Infection:

- Avoid contact with people that are sick: during the cold season, it is important to stay away from crowded places.
- Recognize changes in your body such as fever, chills, chest tightness or shortness of breath and visit your doctor if possible.
- Eating a balanced diet: when a person eats a variety of healthy foods, the immune system (body's defense mechanism) is stronger and can fight a virus, like the flu, more easily. Avoid foods with artificial flavors and colors such as colorful fruit punch, fruit roll-ups, candies, and frozen pops. People who are sensitive to milk protein, wheat, nuts, and/or chocolates, should avoid these products. Sixty percent of people who have allergies to milk protein may have allergies to soy.
- Sleep well: the body needs plenty of rest in order to perform all its functions properly.



**Ask your doctor
about the flu shot.**

PREVENTING TRIGGER FACTORS FOR ASTHMA



asthma
program

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**Miami-Dade County
Health Department**

**Office of Epidemiology
and Disease Control**

Asthma Program

8600 NW 17 Street
Suite 200
Miami, FL 33126
Tel: 305-470-6918

305.470.6918

Preventing Trigger Factors

There are many factors that can trigger an asthma attack. However, not every person has the same reaction or symptoms in an asthma attack. Therefore, it is important for you to monitor the pattern of how different factors may cause you to have an asthma attack and try to avoid them if possible. You can do this by keeping an asthma diary. Here are some ideas about how to reduce the risk of asthma episodes if any of the following are your trigger factors:

Tobacco smoke:

- Do not smoke.
- No one should smoke inside the house. Better yet is if family members quit smoking.
- Do not smoke near a person that suffers from asthma, especially children.

Pets:

- Warm-blooded pets such as dogs, cat, and birds cause allergies in many people due to the dander (flaky scales of the skin) and proteins in their saliva.

- If you are allergic to them, they should be removed from the bedroom or house.
- Pet's allergens may stay in the house for several months after the animal is removed.
- If the animal stays in the house, give the animal a weekly bath to help decrease the amount of saliva and dander in the home.

Dust mites:

Dust mites are microscopic animals that live in dust and cause most of the allergies.

- Keep all surfaces and furniture clean.
- Keep humidity and moisture low (a dehumidifier can be used).
- Use air cleaner devices such as air filter to control indoor air.
- **Avoid vacuum cleaning.** If possible, replace carpeting with tile.
- Mop the floor with a damp cloth instead of sweeping.
- **Bedding should be washed every week in hot water. Use mattress and pillow covers.**

Indoor mold:

Mold is a microscopic fungi that can be found on plants or animal wastes.



- **Keep low humidity levels** (a dehumidifier may be used).
- **Keep plants outdoors.**
- Use a fan or open window in the kitchen or bathroom when cooking or taking a shower.
- Do not use any humidifier.
- Bedding should be washed every week in hot water.

Chemicals/fumes:

- Try to avoid them as much as possible.
- Use in a well ventilated area.
- If using a gas stove, always use exhaust fan.
- Avoid household sprays such as cleaner's products as well as personal products such as perfumes, hair sprays, talcum powder, spray deodorant, candles, plug-ins, incense, and some cosmetic.

Outdoor air:

- Avoid parking garages and traffic jams.
- Whenever there are high levels of pollution and pollen, you should stay inside and not do any heavy exercise.

Medications:

- Develop a treatment plan with your doctor for both long term control and quick relief.
- Take the medicines all the time, even when feeling well.
- Take the correct amount of medication.
- Begin treatment early when first signs appear, such as coughing.
- Monitor the treatment to determine if the medication is working.
- Use devices like the peak flow meter to monitor the airflow and a spacer for the inhalation of the medication .
- Visit your doctor frequently and discuss the treatment, and if you are taking other medications for other conditions.