

Follow your doctor's advice

Some respiratory diseases like asthma cannot be cured, but can be well controlled. Today's treatment for asthma focuses on preventing asthma attacks.

- Use your medication exactly as instructed.
- Do not take other people's medication.
- Do not stop taking or change the dose of a drug without first consulting your physician.

**Don't hesitate to ask
your doctor and
respiratory care
professional for
help if you need it**

RESPIRATORY DISEASES: basics



"No person shall, on the grounds of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion or gender be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving or benefiting from federal financial assistance.



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Respiratory Diseases

Breathing is something we do without thinking. Therefore, most people take breathing for granted. According to the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC), the majority of children who are hospitalized are admitted with a respiratory illness. **Thousands of Americans suffer from breathing problems.** These problems can range from chronic lung problems such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema etc. to others like pneumonia, bronchiolitis, allergy, cystic fibrosis, and lung cancer.

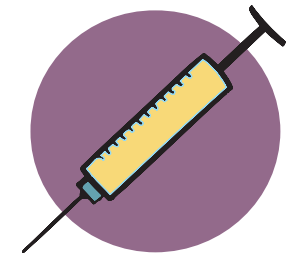
What are some of the symptoms of respiratory diseases?

The symptoms of respiratory diseases can vary from mild symptoms like sneezing, watery eyes, runny/watery nose like in colds and flu, to more serious symptoms such as wheezing, chronic dry cough, shortness of breath, tightness or pain in the chest etc. in chronic bronchitis, pneumonia or asthma.

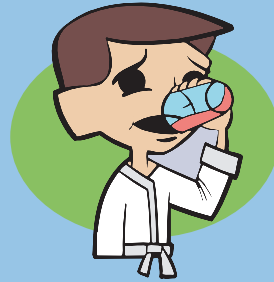
Only a doctor can determine what kind of disease you suffer from and what the right treatment is for you.

The flu shot may help avoid more serious problems and prevent respiratory infections

Pneumococcal vaccine may be helpful for people over age 55 and with other chronic illnesses like diabetes and liver disease.



Recommendations to help you breathe easier:



DRINK PLENTY OF WATER. Fluids make the production of mucus less solid and easier to expel when coughing.

Allergies

Are a very common problem affecting at least 2 out of every 10 Americans. Allergies are an overreaction of the immune system to an external, inhaled allergen or irritant. **People can be allergic to a variety of substances. However, the most common are pollen, dust mites, molds and animal dander.** Exposure to such "allergens" or "irritants" can cause the muscles of the respiratory system to narrow the airways, which produce a wheezing sound when breathing. Other symptoms of allergies include sneezing, congestion, watery eyes, runny nose, itching and coughing. **Most frequent allergens can be removed from the home environment, for example dust, carpeting, feathers, pets, stuffed animals, aerosol sprays, excessive humidity and smoke.** Some other tips include: to stay indoors when pollen is high and to keep pets outside the house. **Avoid those trigger factors** that can provoke symptoms in you.

Tobacco Smoke

From other family members can have a serious effect on the respiratory health of people suffering from respiratory diseases and mostly on young children. **Quit smoking and stay away from people when they are smoking.**

Control Indoor Air Pollution

Indoor allergens can cause complications in people with respiratory problems.

These allergens can be decreased or eliminated. Some suggestions on how to decrease or eliminate them are: **tobacco** (allow no smoking in your house), **fumes** (install exhaust fans in kitchen, bath room and any work area), **dust and dirt** (clean dryer filters and coils on the refrigerator often, and replace air conditioner filters), **aerosol products, household chemical cleaners** (use baking soda or vinegar and water as cleaners), **poor air circulation** (keep the doors of all rooms open to allow proper circulation), **humidity; houseplants** (they are a major source of mold), **mold and mildew** (check any place that moisture accumulates such as bathrooms, cellars, basements).