

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a lung disease that can cause trouble breathing. Swollen airway passages make it hard for air to move in and out of the lungs. This can cause wheezing, coughing, tightness in the chest and shortness of breath. There is no cure for asthma, but asthma symptoms can be controlled to allow for an active lifestyle and prevent long-term damage to the airways.



Call 1-844-732-2436
and to schedule an
appointment with an
asthma specialist.

Causes and Risk Factors for Asthma

Asthma can happen to anyone at any age, but most often develops in childhood. The most common risk factors are:

- Family history.
- Being exposed to secondhand smoke.
- Being exposed to chemical irritants or industrial dusts.
- Having other medical conditions, such as allergies or obesity.
- Having viral respiratory infections as a young child.

Symptoms of Asthma

Asthma symptoms are not always the same for everyone. The most common are:

- Coughing – especially at night or in the early morning.
- Wheezing – a whistling sound when you breathe out.
- Chest tightness – the feeling of pressure or squeezing of the chest.
- Shortness of breath – the feeling of not being able to get enough air or catch your breath. This can get worse with activity.

Want to Learn More?

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Treatment of Asthma

- Avoid triggers. For example, if tobacco smoke is a trigger for you, do not smoke or allow other people to smoke in your home or car.
- Short-term relief medicines, also called quick-relief medicines, help prevent or relieve symptoms during an asthma attack. They include an inhaler to carry with you all the time and/or other types of medicines which work quickly to help open your airways.
- Control medicines are taken every day to help prevent symptoms. They work to reduce airway inflammation and narrowing. Make an asthma action plan with your doctor so you will know what to do when your asthma flares up. Taking care of a flare-up early can help you stop a more serious attack from happening.

The sooner you find out that you have asthma, the sooner you can start to control it. Talk with your doctor if you are at risk or have symptoms. Your doctor will do an exam, ask questions about your symptoms, the way you live, job, family health history, hobbies and medicines you are taking. Your doctor will also tell you if you need more tests done, like a pulmonary function test, to check your breathing and your overall health.

Sources: Mayo Clinic, National Institute of Health, American Lung Association

www.tricare-west.com



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