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ASTHMA

What Is Asthma?

Asthma is a disease that affects your lungs. It is the most common long-term disease of childhood that can persist up to adulthood. Asthma causes repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and nighttime or early morning coughing. If you have asthma, you have it all the time, but you will have asthma attacks only when something bothers your lungs.

How Is Asthma Diagnosed?

A healthcare provider is needed to diagnose Asthma through taking a detailed history & physical examination, important symptoms are night time cough, breathing which becomes difficult during physical activities, presence of chest tightness, wheezing, and colds that last for days. Moreover presence of the same condition of a family member will be asked.

A lung function test called Spirometry is also important to Aid in the Diagnosis of Asthma. A spirometer measures the largest amount of air you can exhale, or breathe out, after taking a very deep breath. The spirometer can measure airflow before and after you use asthma medicine.

What Is An Asthma Attack?

An asthma attack happens in your body's airways, which are the paths that carry air to your lungs. As the air moves through your lungs, the airways become smaller, like the branches of a tree are smaller than the tree trunk. During an asthma attack, the sides of the airways in your lungs swell, and the airways shrink. Less air gets in and out of your lungs, and mucus that your body produces clogs up the airways even more. The attack may include coughing, chest tightness, wheezing, and trouble breathing. Some people call an asthma attack an "episode."

What Triggers an Asthma Attack?

- 1) Strenuous physical exercise
- 2) Some medicines like Aspirin
- 3) Bad weather such as thunderstorms, high humidity, or freezing temperatures
- 4) Some foods and food additives can trigger an asthma attack
- 5) Strong emotional states can also lead to hyperventilation and an asthma attack
- 6) Allergens like dust, pollen. Smoke & Air pollution
- 7) Respiratory tract infections
- 8) Furry Pets like dogs & cats
- 9) Cockroach allergen
- 10) Molds

How Is Asthma Treated?

You can control your asthma and avoid an attack by taking your medicine exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to do and by avoiding things that can cause an attack. Some medicines can be inhaled, or breathed in, and some can be taken as a pill. Asthma medicines come in two types—quick-relief and long-term control. Quick-relief medicines control the symptoms of an asthma attack.

The important thing to remember is that you can control your asthma. With your healthcare provider's help, make your own asthma management plan so that you know what to do based on your own symptoms. Decide who should have a copy of your plan and where he or she should keep it. Take your long-term control medicine even when you don't have symptoms.