

ASTHMA

Asthma is a disease of the lungs that is characterized by tightening of the air pathways. Common symptoms of asthma are wheezing, shortness of breath, coughing, chest pain, tightness or pressure. Many of these conditions are reversible with medication but not 100% reversible in all patients. Some common features of asthma are inflammation, airway obstruction and airway sensitivity. Some risk factors for asthma are a family history of asthma, regular lung infections, presence of allergies and exposure to tobacco smoke, low birth weight, and being male.

The current rise in asthma cases among children is alarming. Asthma may occur at any age but is very common in children. Approximately 10% of children have asthma and that rate may rise in the future. Experts don't agree why the rate is increasing but here are some ideas:

- Children are being exposed to more triggers (things that bring on asthma attacks; dust, tobacco smoke, pollution)
- Children don't have strong immune systems (they aren't exposed to many childhood diseases.)
- Decreases in the rates of breast feeding may also play a role.

Asthma is a disease that causes many problems for the patient. However, it can be controlled. With the right information and medical attention medical professionals can prevent many deaths.

QUESTIONS: (Express your ideas)

- 1.What are some of the common symptoms of asthma?**
- 2.Is asthma reversible with medication? Explain your answer.**
- 3.What are some risk factors for asthma?**
- 4.What population is seeing a rise in asthma cases?**
- 5.What are the theories why the rate is increasing in this population?**

ASTHMA ATTACKS

Asthma is a disease of the lungs that causes wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and difficulty breathing. It can be very scary for the patient. Luckily, asthma and its effects are reversible with medication. There are a few options for asthma treatment:

- Breathing machines (or nebulizers) are machines that turn liquid medication into mist. A mask is used and treatment takes about 10-15 minutes and is given several times per day.**
- Inhalers are common for older patients and medication is breathed in using a spacer.**
- Syrups and other oral medications are available, but aren't useful for asthma attacks because their effects take time.**

Asthma attacks are the periods when symptoms suddenly become worse. Some common triggers for these attacks are exercise, infections, dust, tobacco smoke, allergens, cold air and nervousness. Limiting exposure to these triggers may help improve quality of life. When an asthma attack occurs, take your medication according to your asthma action plan, wait 10 to 15 minutes if symptoms worsen or don't improve immediate medical attention may be necessary. Some danger signs are severe wheezing or coughing, trouble walking, and blue lips or fingernails. If any of these danger signs occur go to the emergency room or call 911.

Asthma is a lifelong disease. Some people have fewer attacks as they grow older, but most patients see a return of symptoms in their 30s and 40s. The effects of asthma attacks on the lungs can cause serious problems later in life. Proper management of asthma is very important.

QUESTIONS:

1.What are 3-4 triggers of asthma attack?

2.What are asthma attacks?

3.How can you reverse the effects on asthma attacks?

4.What are some danger signs associated with asthma attack?

5.What should a patient do if any danger sign occur?

