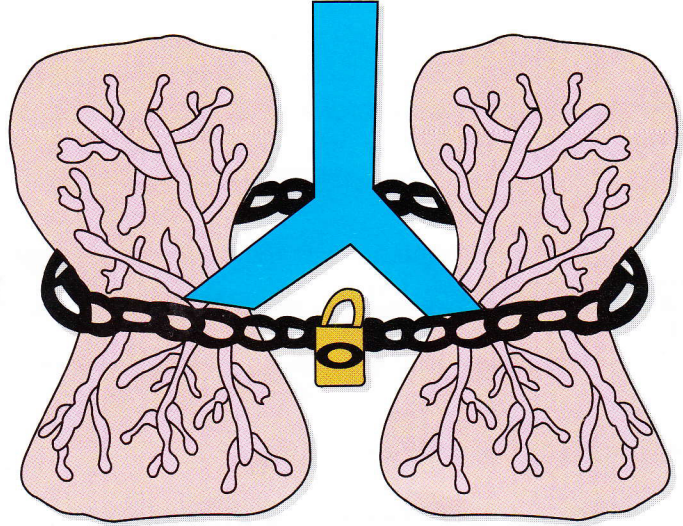


Asthma In Children

A Guide for Patients/Families



This brochure provides information about Asthma in children. It is designed to respond to the questions parents most frequently ask.



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What is Asthma

- Asthma is a disease of the, passage ways that carry air to the lungs. When asthma symptoms become worse than usual it is called an asthma attack or episode.
- Asthma episodes usually result from a combination of factors. In addition there are environmental factors which act as a trigger for the attacks.

Facts about Asthma


- Asthma affects people of all ages. Children with family history of allergy and asthma are more likely to have asthma.
- Majority of the kids who have childhood asthma outgrow it as they get older. However a small number may continue to have it as teens and adults.
- There is no cure for asthma but with the right management asthma symptoms can be controlled well.
- With good control your child's asthma should not limit his physical activities

What Happens in An asthma Episode?

- The airway of your lungs becomes narrow because:
 - The muscles around them tighten
 - The inner lining swells
 - There is increased mucus production
- When you breath a whistling sound or wheezing is produced.

Are Asthma Episodes Dangerous?

Episodes may be mild, moderate or severe. Most often they are mild and the airway opens within a few hours. However, some asthma episodes are very serious and need immediate intensive treatment at the hospital.



What are Some Possible Triggers for Asthma

Allergies

Kind of foods e.g nuts, chocolate, eggs, artificially-colored beverages, fish and other sea foods.

- Pollens from trees and grasses, hay, ragweed.
- Animal dander ,e.g rabbits, cats, dogs, chicken and birds.
- Dust mite contained in housedust., carpet , mattresses, heavy drapes and stuffed toys.
- Mould (indoor and outdoor).
- Insect body parts, such as those from dead cockroaches.
- Drugs, like aspirin.

Homehold Products

- Furniture polish, cleaner, or room deodorizers.
- Deodorants, perfumes, hair sprays, talcum powder, scented cosmetics.

Weather

- Blast of cold air.
- Excessive humidity.
- Changes in seasons.

Air Pollution

- Traffic jams.
- Smoke-filled rooms.

Exercise

- Wheezing may begin after overexertion in some children. It is called exercise induced asthma.



Infections

- Viral and other infections e.g cold , tonsillitis and bronchitis.

Emotions

- Strong emotional expressions like fear, anger, crying and smoke.

Smoke

- From cigarettes, cigars etc.

What are the available treatments

Two kinds of asthma medications are used:

- 1- Quick relief or short acting bronchodilators: these medication are used to relief the acute symptoms of asthma.
- 2- Preventive or anti inflammatory: these medications are used to prevent your child from having asthma attacks.
Your Paediatrician will prescribe which medicine and mode to deliver medicine is best for your child.

Mode of delivery of medications:

Nebulizers are machine used to deliver asthma medication in young children.

Inhaler: Most kids are able to use a inhaler when they are 4-6 yrs old. A younger child may use a inhaler with a spacer and a mask





What are the Symptoms of an Asthma Episode?

- A feeling of tightness in chest.
- Wheezing.
- Worsening dry cough.
- Breathing rapidly or difficulty breathing.
- Restlessness while trying to sleep.

What should I do when an episode is just beginning?

- Use medications as prescribed by your Paediatrician.
- Try to relax your child and offer plenty of fluids.
- If your child's symptoms do not improve or are worsening even after using quick relief medication or short acting bronchodilator call your doctor or visit the Emergency Room.

What can I do to keep my child's asthma under control ?

Use medications as prescribed by your doctor.

Ask your Paediatrician to prepare an action plan so that you know which medications to use when your child begins to have symptoms and when to bring him to the hospital.

Try to identify and then avoid agents which trigger your child's asthma.

Try to keep a daily symptom diary, this will help your doctor to manage your child's asthma more efficiently.

Let your Paediatrician know if your child needs bronchodilator more than once or twice a week.

Peak flow meter is an instrument which shows how much air your child can get out of his lung. This can help you determine how well your child is doing with his asthma. Your doctor can help you learn how to use a peakflow meter.

For further information, please call:

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