

MANAGING ASTHMA THROUGH LIFESTYLE MODIFICATIONS

In partnership with POTENTRx

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What is Asthma?

Asthma is a chronic lung condition where the airways inside the lungs are often inflamed. The lungs become extra sensitive to different stimuli such as cold temperatures, smoke, dust, pollutants, allergens, etc. When the lungs encounter these “triggers”, the airways inside swell, produce excess mucus, and the surrounding muscles of the airways may also tighten up, making breathing extremely difficult. This is called an asthma episode or asthma attack, and can be extremely dangerous— even fatal.

**Approximately
1 in 12 people
(roughly 25 mil-
lion) have asthma,
with this number
growing every
year.**

CDC, 2011

Know Your Facts!

Q: Is there a cure for asthma?

A: No, there is no known cure for asthma. However, there are ways to manage the condition.

Q: Can the severity of my asthma be reduced?

A: Yes! Asthma is a reversible condition when managed correctly. Some people who have asthma when they are young find that they don't experience any of the symptoms later in life.

Q: What are some symptoms of asthma?

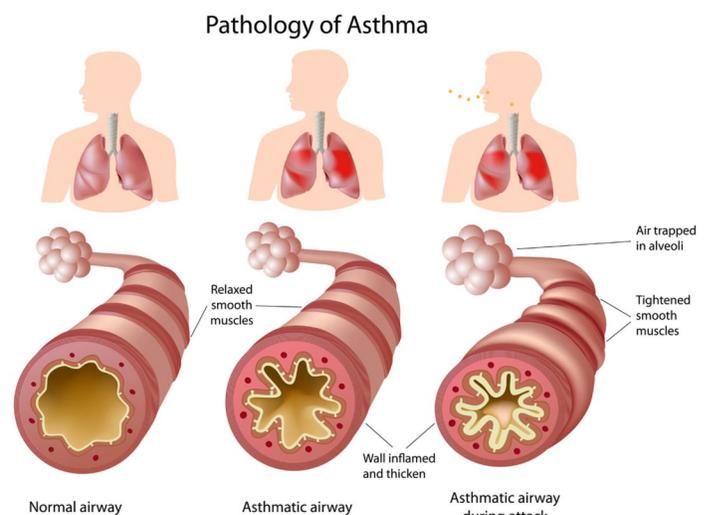
A: Asthma symptoms may differ from person to person, but here are some symptoms: wheezing when breathing, a frequent cough that can worsen at night and may be accompanied by mucus expulsion, shortness of breath, and chest tightness.

Q: Can my asthma become worse?

A: If not managed properly, asthma symptoms can become progressively worse and can lead to permanent lung damage. You should develop a plan with your health care provider to manage your asthma, and also monitor or keep track of your symptoms to help you take control of your condition.

Q: Is there anything I can do to control my asthma aside from taking medication?

A: Yes! There are many modifiable risk factors that contribute to asthma. Please refer to the reverse side for lifestyle changes that can help to relieve asthma.





What Can Lifestyle Changes Do For Asthma?

There are many proven and recommended lifestyle changes to manage asthma — exercise and reducing your exposure to asthma triggers, or asthmagens, are two great ways to help with controlling your asthma and its symptoms. Although it may seem counterintuitive, aerobic exercise can actually alleviate some symptoms of asthma and help your lungs to become stronger. Reducing your exposure to asthmagens in your home and workplace is also another way of alleviating or preventing asthmatic symptoms. You may be interested in referencing the American Lung Association for tips to help you create an asthma friendly environment in your home and workplace, or even at school for your children.

Factors of Asthma

There is no known, definite cause of asthma, but the following are known to increase risk for asthma:

Modifiable Risk Factors

Exposure to allergens, pollutants, and chemicals.

Non-Modifiable Risk Factors

Genetics, family history of allergies, and contact with respiratory viruses, allergens and certain pollutants during childhood.

What Can Exercise Do For Asthma?

Regular aerobic exercise can reduce inflammation in the lungs and also reduce the amount of asthmatic symptoms. It is recommended that individuals exercise 3-5 times a week at a moderate intensity (60-70% of maximal effort) for 20-30 minutes per session without exacerbating your symptoms. Greater benefits from aerobic exercise can be seen in people with higher levels of inflammation in the lungs from asthma.

