

BRONCHIAL ASTHMA

BRONCHIAL ASTHMA IS A LONG-TERM RESPIRATORY CONDITION.

It's a serious lung disease rooted in prolonged bronchitis. Exposure to triggers causes inflammation in the bronchial mucous membrane, leading to swelling, increased mucus, and muscle contraction. This results in narrowed bronchial passages and the occurrence of seizures.

CAUSES OF ASTHMA

Anyone can get asthma, no matter how old you are. If it runs in your family, you might be more likely to get it and become sensitive to things that don't bother people who are healthy. There are different things, called **TRIGGERS**, that can make asthma worse. These include pollen, viruses, some medicines, dust mites, chemicals in fertilizers and sprays, strong smells, cigarette smoke, cold air, certain foods, smoke from fires, and mold. Asthma can also be triggered by infections, exercise, colds, stress, and feeling upset.



WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ASTHMA?

It often starts with a dry cough that lasts for a few weeks. You might feel like you're breathing heavily and not getting enough air, and you might hear a wheezing sound.

You could also feel tired and find it harder to do physical activities, with pressure on your chest.

When the symptoms get worse or there's a new episode, it's called an exacerbation.

SYMPTOMS OF AN ASTHMA ATTACK

They typically come on suddenly, often after encountering certain triggers. Here are the signs:

- Hard time breathing
- Whistling sound when breathing
- Trouble speaking (the sufferer may use short sentences and whispers)
- Coughing
- Feeling restless and anxious
- Signs of hypoxia, such as grayish-blue lips, earlobes and nails
- Feeling very tired during a strong asthma attack

If it gets worse, the person might stop breathing and pass out.

FIRST AID DURING AN ASTHMA ATTACK



- Stay calm and help the person having an asthma attack.
- If they have an inhaler with a relief drug and an anti-inflammatory drug, ask them to use it.
- Tell them to take slow and deep breaths and make sure they're sitting comfortably.
- For a mild attack, two puffs of the relief drug can often help. Wait for 5 minutes, and if needed, give two more puffs. Also, get medical help.
- **If the inhaler doesn't work, or if the person's breathing gets worse and they can't talk, or if the attack is making them too tired, call 999 for emergency help.**
- Assist the person in using their inhaler. While waiting for the ambulance, watch for important signs like their level of awareness, breathing, and pulse.
- Note down all this information so you can share it with the ambulance team when they arrive.



WHAT TO DO IF THE FIRST SEIZURE OCCURS AND PARENT/PATIENT DOESN'T HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH ASTHMA?

The first time someone has an asthma attack, it can be scary and confusing for the family. No one may know what's happening. In this situation, it's crucial to stay calm and act fast, but also wisely. Most importantly, reassure the person having the asthma attack, who is often very anxious, and call for medical help right away by dialing the emergency number 999.



ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM A DOCTOR FOR PATIENTS

The basic advice is to trust your doctor and follow their advice and recommendations.

By working with your healthcare team you will:

- Understand the signs when your condition suddenly gets worse.
- Figure out which medicines to take regularly and which ones only when needed.
- Know how to steer clear of things that might cause an asthma attack.
- Master the right way to use your inhaler for taking your medication.

Asthma is not a contagious disease.

It's important to share honest and clear information about your condition with people close to you. This helps them understand your illness, and if needed, they can support you or provide assistance.

