

ASTHMA : UNDERSTAND THE DETAILS OF MY DIAGNOSIS

Patient : _____

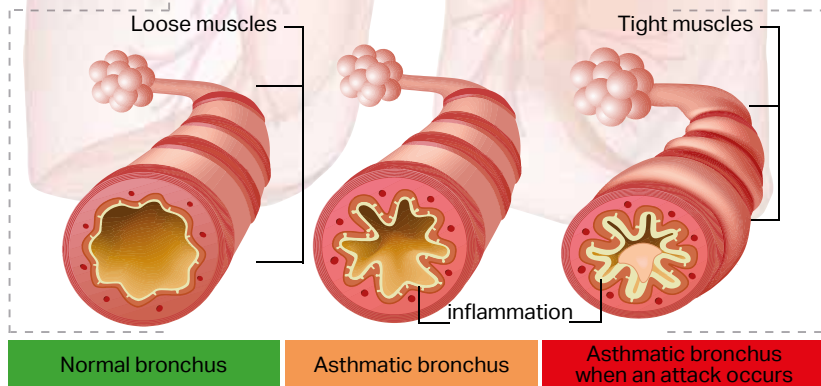
Doctor : _____

Asthma is a chronic respiratory disease that remains ongoing, even without experiencing any symptoms. Symptoms usually occur when you are exposed to triggers. This is known as an asthma attack.

ASTHMA MECHANISM

Difficulty expelling air from the lungs due to:

- inflammation inside the bronchus ;
- contraction of the muscle surrounding the bronchus (bronchostenosis) ;
- increased production of thick secretions that block the bronchus.



SYMPTOMS

- Shortness of breath
- Feeling of tightness (in the chest)
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Increased production of thick secretions

Asthma symptoms can vary in frequency and intensity over time and within a single day or night.

TRIGGERS

Several factors can trigger asthma symptoms or make them worse. These can vary from one person to another. Although it is not always easy, it is important to identify the things that cause the onset or worsening of coughs and avoid them as much as possible.

- Tobacco smoke ;
- Irritating products ;
- Air pollution ;
- Emotional disturbances ;
- Sudden changes in temperature (cold air and humidity) ;
- Allergens (dust mites, animals, mould spores, pollen, etc.) ;
- Hormonal fluctuations (at the onset of menstruation or during pregnancy) ;
- Physical activity ;
- Allergic rhinitis ;
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease ;
- Medications ;
- Respiratory infections (cold, flu, sinusitis, etc.).
Might involve adjusting your treatment

IN ORDER TO OPTIMIZE ASTHMA MANAGEMENT, YOU SHOULD :

- ✓ Be knowledgeable and aware of the symptoms ;
- ✓ Control your environment and avoid triggers ;
- ✓ Understand how medications work and take them as prescribed ;
- ✓ Ensure proper medication inhalation technique ;
- ✓ Regularly reassess asthma regulation using the asthma control test (ACT).

ASTHMA DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosing asthma is based on symptoms, clinical assessment, as well as medical and family history. An accurate diagnosis is key to optimizing disease management. Therefore, asthma has to be verified using spirometry, a test that measures the maximal amount of air you can exhale and at what speed. Although spirometry is the standard test for asthma, sometimes the result is not conclusive and additional tests may be required to confirm the diagnosis.

My asthma was confirmed by a spirometry test

My asthma was confirmed by another test : _____

ASTHMA TREATMENT

People with asthma should be able to live a normal life. There are different medications to help manage symptoms and prevent asthma attacks.

Management Drugs

While these drugs don't bring immediate relief of symptoms, daily use can help treat inflammation over the long term and reduce the need for rescue medication. It also minimizes the bronchus's vulnerability to triggers, which significantly reduces the frequency and severity of symptoms.

**Inhaled corticosteroid (ICS)
Combination therapy
(ICS + long-acting bronchodilator)**

Rescue medication

These medications are used to relieve occasional or immediate symptoms of asthma and should always be kept on hand in case of emergency.

**Combination therapy
(only budesonide/formoterol can be used)
Short-acting bronchodilator**

Adjunctive Treatments

Adjunctive therapy may need to be added to the management drugs to better control the symptoms of asthma.

**Leukotriene receptor antagonist
Biological drugs**

Untreated asthma can permanently alter the airways, leading to irreversible bronchial obstruction, permanent breathing difficulties and decreased response to treatment. In such cases, contact with a trigger can lead to a severe asthma attack, potentially resulting in hospitalization and even death.

ASTHMA CONTROL CRITERIA

In the past 4 weeks, have you been :

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Experiencing asthma symptoms during the day more than twice a week ? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Waking up at night because of your asthma ? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Using your rescue medication more than 2 times/week ? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Restricted in your activities because of your asthma ? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

CONTROLLED ASTHMA You answered NO to everything

- Take your management drugs as prescribed.

Management Drugs : Dose : mcg/inh Inhalation(s) :

Frequency : times a day **every day**

- Take your rescue medication as needed.

Management Drugs : Dose : mcg/inh Inhalation(s) :

Frequency : **as needed**

POORLY CONTROLLED ASTHMA You answered YES to 1 or more questions

- Adjust your treatment according to your action plan.

Management Drugs : Dose : mcg/inh Inhalation(s) :

Frequency : times/day **every day** Treatment duration :

Rescue medication : Dose : mcg/inh Inhalation(s) :

Frequency : **as needed (do not repeat before 4 hours)**

Oral corticosteroids : Dose : # tablet(s) :

Frequency : times/day Treatment duration :

After implementing your action plan, your symptoms are **under control**.

After implementing your action plan, your symptoms are **the same or have worsened**.

UNCONTROLLED ASTHMA

This is an **EMERGENCY**. You are having an asthma attack!

After implementing your action plan, your symptoms are the same or have worsened.
Shortness of breath—Sensation of tightness in the chest—Wheezing—Coughing
Your rescue medication does not relieve your symptoms for at least 4 hours.

- Contact a doctor or go to the emergency room immediately if the doctor cannot be reached.
- Take 1–2 inhalations of your rescue medication and repeat every 20 minutes as needed.
- Be sur to not exceed the maximum daily dose. inh/24h