

Asthma

Asthma is a chronic disease that affects people of all ages. It causes the muscles surrounding the airways to swell (inflammation) and narrow. As a result, it causes breathing difficulties such as coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath, among others.

Symptoms

The signs of asthma can be different from person to person. Some of these are:

- Tightness in the chest
- Persistent cough
- Difficulty sleeping
- Trouble breathing
- Chest pain
- Wheezing causes a whistling sound when you exhale



What can trigger an asthma attack?

Exposure to allergens and/or environmental irritants such as dust mites, smoke and chemicals, among others, can increase the risk of an asthma attack. It is worth mentioning that an asthma attack can last from minutes to days.

How is the diagnosis made?

The doctor will examine your lungs with a stethoscope. He or she will also check your medical history and ask about your symptoms. You may also need tests, including pulmonary function tests, chest x-rays, allergy tests and arterial blood gases.

Treatment

Asthma has no cure. However, it can be improved through different treatments. The goals are to control in airway inflammation airways, help you perform routine activities as normal, and limit exposure to substances.

Some of these medications are for controlling asthma attacks (as maintenance treatment), and some are quick-relief medications for use during attacks (as rescue doses).

Important: Allergy testing can find the factors that are triggering asthma attacks. To keep asthma under control, it is necessary to use medications as recommended by your doctor and maintain an action plan.

What is the action plan?

The asthma action plan is a written document to manage the disease. It should include:

- Instructions for using medications.
- List what triggers an asthma attack and how to avoid them.
- Recognize when asthma gets worse, the time to call your doctor or visit an emergency room.

Social and Emotional

For recommendations, tools and resources on how you and your family can cope with emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after treatment, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line 1-844-347-7801
TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804
APS Health 787-641-9133

References:

<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/asthma.html>
<https://www.who.int/es/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/asthma>

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