

Asthma is a disease that affects your lungs. It is one of the most common long-term diseases of children, but adults can have asthma, too. Asthma causes wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing at night or early in the morning. If you have asthma, you have it all the time, but you will have asthma attacks only when something bothers your lungs.

## Symptoms

An asthma attack happens in your body's airways, which are the paths that carry air to your lungs. As the air moves through your lungs, the airways become smaller. During an asthma attack, the sides of the airways in your lungs swell and the airways shrink. Less air gets in and out of your lungs, and mucous that your body makes clogs up the airways. An asthma attack may include:

- Coughing
- Chest Tightness
- Wheezing
- Trouble Breathing



## Common Triggers

We don't know for sure what causes asthma, but we do know that attacks are sometimes triggered by:

- Allergens (like pollen, mold, animal dander, and dust mites)
- Exercise
- Occupational hazards
- Tobacco smoke
- Air pollution
- Airway infections

## How is Asthma Treated?

Take your medicine exactly as your doctor tells you and stay away from things that can trigger an attack to control your asthma. Everyone with asthma does not take the same medicine. You can breathe in some medicines and take other medicines as a pill. Asthma medicines come in two types—quick-relief and long-term control. Quick-relief medicines control the symptoms of an asthma attack. If you need to use your quick-relief medicines more and more, visit your doctor to see if you need a different medicine. Long-term control medicines help you have fewer and milder attacks, but they don't help you while you are having an asthma attack.