



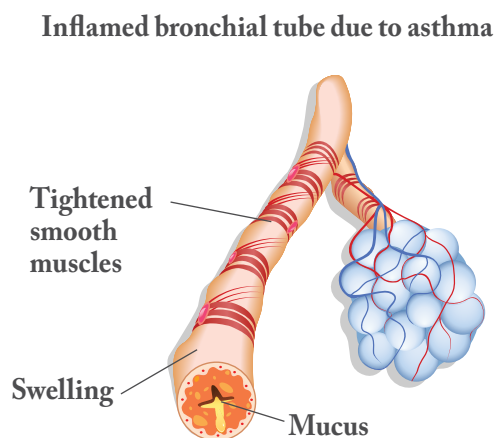
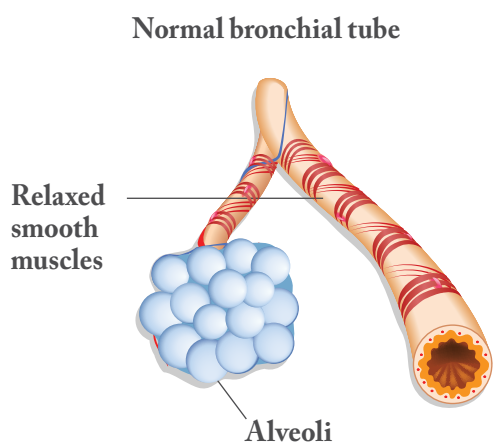
Live Well with Asthma: Ages 12 and Older

What Is Asthma?

Asthma is a long-term condition that affects the small breathing tubes in your lungs. When asthma makes it difficult for you to breathe, it's called a "flare-up."

During a flare-up, your breathing tubes:

- Begin to swell (inflammation).
- Fill with mucus.
- Are tightened by the muscles around them (bronchospasm).



Manage Asthma

When asthma is under control, it shouldn't stop you from doing any of your normal activities. You don't need to live with constant or seasonal asthma symptoms.

To manage your asthma, you should:

- Avoid anything that triggers your asthma.
- Use your asthma medications properly.
- Get a flu shot every year.
- Follow your Asthma Action Plan.

Your asthma may be out of control if you:

- Use a rescue inhaler 2 or more times a week.
- Wake up more than 2 times a month from asthma.
- Refill a rescue inhaler more than 2 times a year.

Common asthma triggers:

- Seasonal pollens
- Respiratory viruses such as colds, flu, or COVID
- Pet dander
- Dust mites
- Mold
- Secondhand smoke
- Air pollution or poor air quality
- Specific chemicals or strong smells
- Physical activity (exercise)

Types of Asthma Medications

Controller medications

“Controllers” reduce asthma symptoms and your need to use a rescue inhaler. These medications decrease swelling (inflammation) and mucus in your breathing tubes. After a few weeks, you should have fewer symptoms.

Some people use a controller year-round. Others only need it at certain times of the year, such as spring. Your doctor will tell you when to use your controller, and if it’s okay to stop using it.

It’s important to use it once or twice every day, even when you’re feeling fine. Skipping days makes it less effective.

Rescue medications

This type of medication opens your breathing tubes and provides relief, but only for a few hours. Rescue inhalers don’t prevent the causes of asthma flare-ups. This medication should only be used when you need them.

Budesonide-formoterol (Symbicort) can be both a reliever and a controller. Formoterol relieves symptoms quickly. Budesonide reduces airway inflammation.

If exercise causes your asthma to flare up, use your rescue inhaler 10 to 15 minutes before you begin.

How to Use to Metered Dose Inhaler with a Spacer

- Shake the inhaler well and insert it into the spacer.
- Place the spacer mouthpiece in your mouth after exhaling. Keep the inhaler level.
- Spray 1 puff and breathe in slowly and deeply. If the spacer whistles, breathe in slower.
- Hold your breath for 10 seconds, then exhale slowly.
- Wait 1 minute. If more medication is needed, repeat the steps.
- Rinse your mouth with water after using your controller inhaler.
- Refill when you have 10 doses of medicine left. Most inhalers have counters to show how many doses are left. Clean your inhaler and spacer once a week. Follow the instructions that came with your devices.



HEALTH EDUCATION



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