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Exercise-Induced Asthma

Asthma is a lung condition in which the airways constrict or spasm, causing wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, and chest tightness. Exercise-induced asthma is a form of asthma that occurs during or after physical activity.

Frequent Signs and Symptoms

- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Chest tightness
- Decrease in optimal performance
- Fatigue

Risk Factors

- History of asthma
- Cold air
- Changes in humidity
- Air pollution
- Allergens in the air

Prevention

- Know the triggers of your exercise-induced asthma and avoid them.
- During winter you may need to exercise indoors or wear a mask if you do exercise outdoors.
- Breathing through your nose also warms the air more than mouth breathing.
- Perform warm-up exercises before a vigorous workout.
- Take medications to control your asthma.

Treatment Considerations

Exercise-induced asthma can be successfully treated with medication. Medications can be given to help prevent the asthma attack and to treat the attack. The kind of medication usually tried first is an inhaled bronchodilator. One type, called albuterol (Ventolin, Proventil), should be taken 15 to 30 minutes before starting your activity and during your activity if you start getting symptoms. Other medications that may be tried include cromolyn (Intal) and nedocromil (Tilade). Your health care provider will prescribe these medications and explain how to use them.



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