

# Asthma

Asthma is a common chronic respiratory disease in both children and adults. The bronchial tubes get swollen inside and do not allow air to flow.

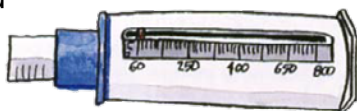
## What are the symptoms?

Feeling short of breath, dry cough, wheezing, a sensation of tightness in the chest. These symptoms are often worse at night and early in the morning.

Asthmatics may have no symptoms for a time, but this does not mean that the disease has disappeared.

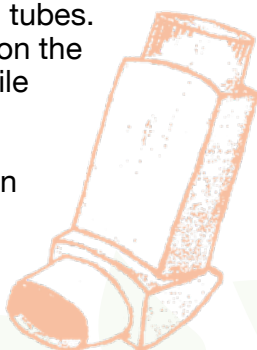
## How is asthma diagnosed?

Diagnosis is based on the patient's medical record, symptoms and a lung function (spirometry, peak expiratory flow rate, etc.).



## How is asthma treated?

Medications improve symptoms. They are given through inhalers, which deliver the drug directly to the bronchial tubes. Some have a relaxing effect on the bronchi (bronchodilators) while others are anti-inflammatory (primarily corticosteroids, which play a prominent role in asthmatic patients). Inhalers must be used in the correct way and with the proper technique, which should be regularly reviewed.



Oral drugs are sometimes given in addition to inhalers (anti-leukotriene agents, corticosteroids, etc.).

It is important for patients to be educated about their maintenance therapy and what to do if their asthma gets worse (personalized action plan with medication to be taken and

instructions on changes to be made based on symptoms or variations in peak flow).

**Tarjeta de autocontrol para el asma**

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

	PICO DE FLUJO	TRATAMIENTO
1	MEJOR = <input type="text"/>	Tratamiento programado
2	% = <input type="text"/>	Doblar dosis de _____ y utilizar _____ a demanda para controlar síntomas
3	% = <input type="text"/>	Iniciar esteroides oral _____ y contactar con su médico
4	% = <input type="text"/>	Acudir a urgencias y/o contactar urgentemente con su médico

## Other measures to prevent asthma attacks:

It is very important not to smoke and to avoid exposure to secondhand smoke. At home, avoid exposure to dust and other irritants:



insecticides, paint, perfumes, smoke, cold air, etc. It is best not to keep pets with fur or feathers (dogs, cats, rabbits, hamsters, birds, etc.) inside your home. Use of humidifiers is not advisable as they can encourage growth of dust mites and mold.

Exercise or play sports. People with asthma can participate in the same activities and sports as everyone else. Sometimes it may be necessary to use an inhaler before exercising.

## What should I do if my asthma gets worse?

If you notice that you are breathless when talking or resting or that you are breathing faster than usual, use the bronchodilator inhaler you were given for emergencies. If you have a personalized treatment plan, follow the instructions. If you have any questions or there is no improvement, ask your health care providers (family doctor or nurse practitioner, emergency services, etc.) what to do.