

Childhood Asthma

Definition:

A chronic, non-communicable, serious common disease characterized by airway inflammation, recurrent attacks, wheezing, and dyspnea. This disease can occur at any age, but 50% of cases occur in children under 10.

Common Symptoms:

- Breathing becomes difficult and uncomfortable for the patient.
- Asthma symptoms are recurrent and may last from minutes to days.
- Asthma attacks can be mild, severe, and sometimes fatal, and medical attention is necessary in severe attacks.
- Other symptoms include chest tightness and shortness of breath, wheezing when exhaling, cough (especially at night) and usually accompanied by thick or clear and yellow phlegm, rapid and shallow breathing that improves when sitting, difficulty breathing, neck muscle contraction, exercise intolerance, difficulty breathing, increased heart rate, bluish and sweaty skin, and anxiety.

Symptoms of Severe Illness (Acute Attack):

- Skin cyanosis, extreme fatigue, noisy breathing like snoring, inability to speak, mental and psychological changes including restlessness or confusion.

Risk Factors:

- Presence of other allergic diseases such as eczema or hay fever
- Family history of asthma or other allergies
- Exposure to dangerous pollutants
- Smoking
- Taking certain medications such as aspirin
- Various stresses
- Viral infections
- Sudden and intense exercise
- Emotional distress
- Harmful odors and tobacco smoke

Prevention:

Asthma attacks can be prevented. Each patient should avoid triggers and irritants that cause airway inflammation and worsen asthma. Avoid known allergens and air pollutants.

Treatment for asthma does not usually require antibiotics. However, if prescribed, be sure to take the medication completely. Avoid smoke in any form and do not be exposed to secondhand smoke. Avoid taking aspirin and blood pressure medications such as atenolol and propranolol. Avoid walking in crowded places.

- Avoid eating the listed trigger foods
- Exercise daily but avoid daily fatigue
- Take medications prescribed to prevent asthma attacks regularly
- Note that even if you feel fine, do not stop taking your medication.
- Avoid taking aspirin.
- Look for and avoid triggers of asthma attacks.
- Perform movements that help clear respiratory secretions.



Possible Complications:

- Respiratory failure, pneumonia, and chronic lung problems due to repeated asthma attacks

Treatment:

- Emergency care and hospitalization in cases of severe asthma attacks, psychotherapy or counseling
- If asthma is related to stress, remove allergens and irritants from your home and workplace as much as possible. Always carry your regular medications with you. Stay at home during times of the year when allergens are abundant in the environment.

Activity:

Stay active when you have this disease, but avoid sudden exercise. If you have an asthma attack after strenuous exercise, sit down and rest. Drink a small amount of warm water. Treatment with bronchodilator medications often prevents exercise-induced asthma.

Diet:

Avoid foods you are allergic to. Drink at least one liter of water daily to keep secretions thin.

When to See a Doctor:

- New and unexplained symptoms: You have had an asthma attack that does not respond to treatment.
- Medications used in treatment may have side effects.

Tips for Preventing Asthma Attacks:

1. Avoid living in a house with allergy-prone animals
2. Avoid using pillows or mattresses containing silk or feathers
3. Wrap pillows and mattresses in plastic, impermeable covers
4. Wash all linens once a week in hot water (55 degrees Celsius).
5. Avoid using rugs as floor coverings if possible
6. Keep windows closed during the pollen season
7. If you have asthma, do not smoke at all and do not allow anyone to smoke in your home.
8. Exclusive breastfeeding of infants up to 6 months of age is one of the ways to prevent asthma from occurring.