

ASTHMA 101



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Session Overview: ASTHMA 101

Say: Thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. If it's okay with you, I'd like to spend a few minutes sharing with you some information about asthma that I hope you will find helpful. If at any time you have questions, please stop me and I'll do my best to answer them. Ready to get started?

ASTHMA 101

Today's Topics:

- ✓ What is asthma?
- ✓ What is an asthma attack?
- ✓ Asthma triggers -- Indoor, Outdoor, & Behavioral
- ✓ Asthma Action Plan
- ✓ Fitting Your Medications into Your Daily Life

What is Asthma?

Say: Before we get started, I thought it would be fun for us to play a little game. I'm going to read a sentence about asthma, and I want you to decide if this is a MYTH or FACT; in other words, TRUE OR FALSE.

Statement #1: Asthma is easy to control

ANSWER: MYTH! Controlling asthma depends on how well you follow your asthma treatment plan, but the condition can be difficult to manage.

Statement #2: Allergies have nothing to do with asthma.

ANSWER: MYTH! People who have asthma have airways that are more sensitive to allergens and these allergens can be asthma triggers. Common allergies include cats, pollen, mold, and dust mites.

Statement #3: People with asthma shouldn't exercise.

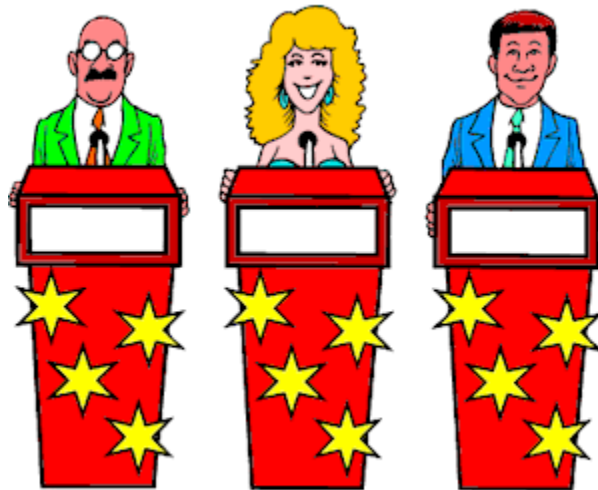
ANSWER: MYTH! In most cases, regular exercise can actually help improve lung function and health you maintain a healthy weight, which can help you breathe easier. But you should talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program.

Statement #4: You can become addicted to asthma medications.

ANSWER: MYTH! Medications used to treat asthma are not addictive; however, because asthma is a chronic disease, long-term use of medicine is often needed to manage the condition and prevent asthma attacks.

Say: Don't worry, some of those questions were really tricky, and many people answer them incorrectly. This is why they continue to be myths! Let's move on, and I'll share with you some other information that you might find interesting.

MYTH OR FACT?



Let's Play!

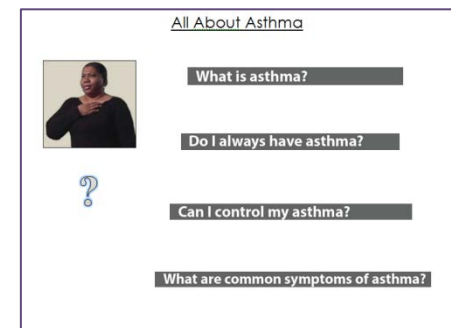
What is asthma?

Say: Asthma is a long-term (chronic) disease of the airways and lungs. When you have asthma, your airways and lungs become easily irritated. This can make it hard for you to breathe. Asthma can develop at any age. Unfortunately, asthma cannot be cured, but the good news is that it can be controlled.

Warning signs, or symptoms, let you know when your asthma is getting worse. Common symptoms of asthma include:

- shortness of breath
- chest tightness
- coughing
- wheezing (hearing a whistling sound as you breathe)

Everyone's symptoms are different. You may have some or all of these symptoms.



All About Asthma



What is asthma?

Do I always have asthma?



Can I control my asthma?

What are common symptoms of asthma?

What is an Asthma Attack?

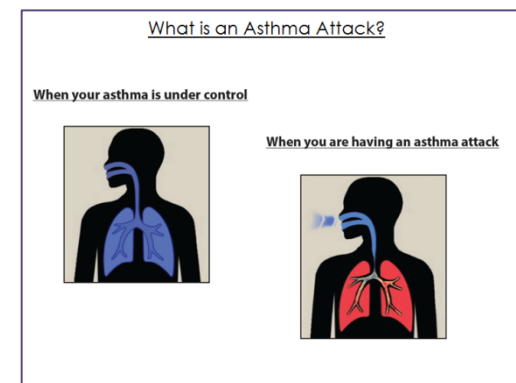
Say: An asthma attack is when your asthma symptoms get worse. When you have an asthma attack it may feel like you cannot get enough air or you are unable to catch your breath.

When your asthma is under control:

When you breathe, air flows in and out of your airways and lungs. In this picture, the blue represents the air freely going into your lungs.

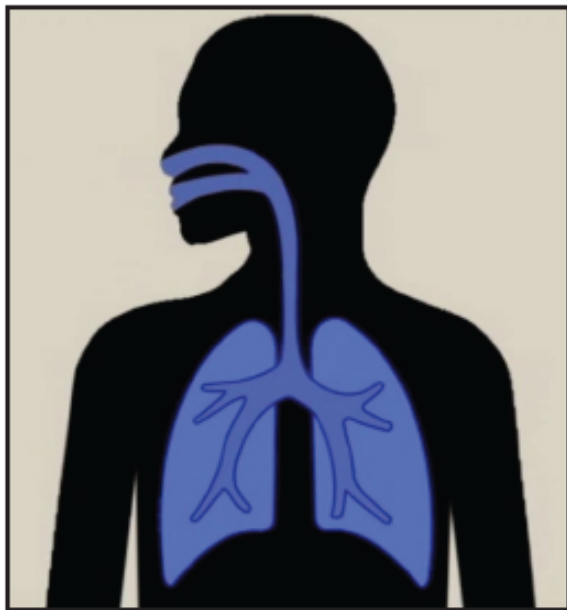
When you are having an asthma attack:

During an asthma attack, airways to the lungs get smaller. This makes it harder for you to breathe. In this picture, the airways are tight. The air [point to participant flipchart, image shown in blue] has trouble getting into your lungs.

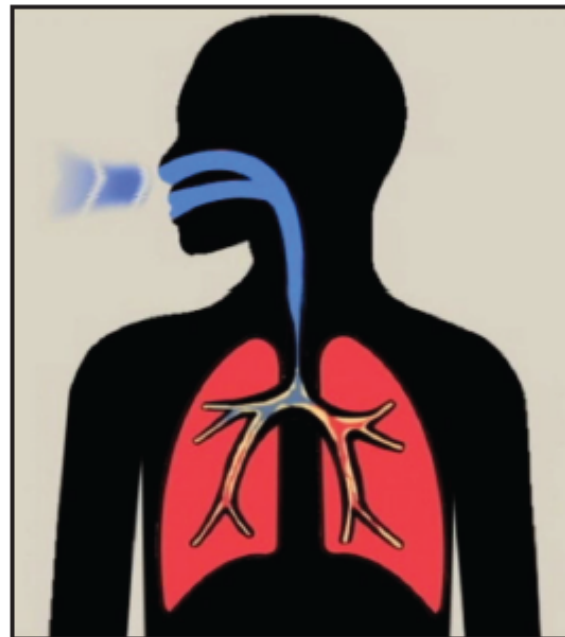


What is an Asthma Attack?

When your asthma is under control



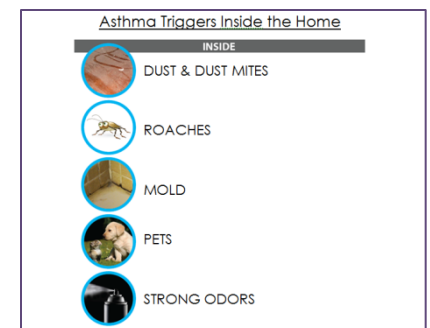
When you are having an asthma attack



Asthma Triggers - Indoor

Say: Triggers are things that bother your asthma. They make your asthma symptoms worse. You can have many different triggers, from different categories below. Some triggers may bother you more than others and they may flare up at different times. You will breathe better if you stay away from your triggers. Here are some common triggers and ways to control them:

- Dust or dust mites -- Keep objects in your home that collect dust clean, including floors and counters. Change your bedding every week, including pillowcases and blankets.
- Roaches -- Roaches are attracted to food and water. Make sure to always get rid of old food and garbage. Fix leaking faucets.
- Mold -- Mold appears as dark spots in your shower, under sinks and cabinets, on walls, or in the basement. Keep those areas clean and dry to reduce mold.
- Pets -- If cats, dogs, or other pets bother your asthma, try to avoid being near them. If you have pets, keep them out of your bedroom.
- Strong Odors -- Sprays, paints, perfumes, and cleaning supplies can have strong odors. If you are in a room that has strong smells, open a window or leave, if possible.



Ask: What are some of your indoor asthma triggers?

Asthma Triggers Inside the Home

INSIDE



DUST & DUST MITES



ROACHES



MOLD



PETS

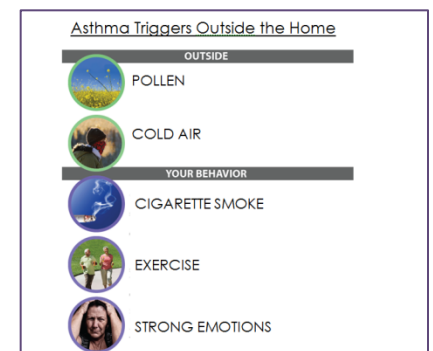


STRONG ODORS

Asthma Triggers - Outdoor & Behavioral

Say: There are also some common triggers outside the home and activities that you do that may trigger an attack:

- Pollen -- Pollen is made of tiny grains that come from trees, flowers, and grass. There is more pollen in the air on hot, dry, and windy days. Stay indoors as much as you can on those days.
- Cold Air -- If you must go outside when it's cold, bundle up. Cover your mouth and nose.
- Cigarette smoke -- Smoking and being around others who smoke is a very strong trigger.
- Exercise -- Staying active is an important part of living a healthy lifestyle, but some types of exercise may cause asthma symptoms. You should talk to your doctor before starting an exercise plan.
- Strong emotions -- Strong emotions like laughter, crying, and anger can irritate your airways. This causes coughing and shortness of breath. Since emotions are sometimes hard to control or prevent, try to stay calm and slow your breathing when this happens.



Ask: What are some of your outdoor and behavioral asthma triggers?

Asthma Triggers Outside the Home

OUTSIDE



POLLEN



COLD AIR

YOUR BEHAVIOR



CIGARETTE SMOKE



EXERCISE



STRONG EMOTIONS

Asthma Action Plan

Say: An Asthma Action Plan is something your doctor gives you to help you manage your asthma and prevent asthma attacks. It can help you remember what to do when your breathing changes.

Ask: Have you ever talked to your doctor about an Asthma Action Plan?

[if yes] Ask: Can we go over your asthma plan?

Say: Your plan describes 3 zones of how you may feel and the actions you should take.

Zone 1: If you are feeling GOOD, you have no asthma symptoms. Your asthma is under control. This is where you should be every day.

Zone 2: If you are feeling NOT GREAT, you have some symptoms. Your medicines may need adjusting.

Zone 3: If you are feeling BAD, you have many severe symptoms. Your asthma is not under control. You need to contact your doctor immediately.

You can look at your Asthma Action Plan any time to see how your breathing is doing. When your breathing changes, you should use your plan to help you decide what to do.




[if no] Ask: Would you like me to help you request an action plan with your doctor?

The image shows a sample Asthma Action Plan form. It is titled 'Asthma Action Plan' and has a space for 'Your Doctor' and 'Your Doctor's Phone #'. The form is divided into three main sections, each with a heading and a list of symptoms and actions:

- GOOD (Zone 1):** 'How's your asthma today?' with a 'GOOD' icon. Symptoms: 'You feel all of these: • Breathing is good • No cough, wheeze, or chest tightness'. Action: 'Continue your CONTROLLER medicines every day. (Don't stop unless your doctor tells you to.)'.
- NOT GREAT (Zone 2):** 'How's your asthma today?' with a 'NOT GREAT' icon. Symptoms: 'You feel some of these: • Cough, wheeze, chest tightness • More symptoms than you expect • You're waking at night • You're having trouble doing your usual activities'. Action: 'Call your doctor as soon as you can. Continue your CONTROLLER medicines. Add your RELIEVER medicine. (Don't stop unless your doctor tells you to.)'.
- BAD (Zone 3):** 'How's your asthma today?' with a 'BAD' icon. Symptoms: 'You feel some of these: • Breathing is getting worse fast • Wheezing is loud and fast • You're having trouble doing your usual activities • You're having trouble sleeping • You're having trouble breathing in • You're having trouble breathing out'. Action: 'Call your doctor as soon as you can. Add your RELIEVER medicine. If you can't contact your doctor, go to the emergency room. Your doctor will want to see you right away. If you can't contact your doctor, go to the emergency room. (Don't stop unless your doctor tells you to.)'.

Arrows on the right side of the form point from each section to its corresponding zone label: 'ZONE 1', 'ZONE 2', and 'ZONE 3'.

Asthma Action Plan

Asthma Action Plan for [INSERT PT NAME] [DATE]	
Your Doctor: _____ Your Doctor's Phone #: _____	
How's your asthma today?	
GOOD 	GO Use these CONTROLLER medicines every day
You have <u>all</u> of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breathing is good• No cough, wheeze, or chest tightness Peak flow at or above:	INHALED MEDICATION (HOW MUCH AND WHEN TO TAKE IT)
NOT GREAT 	CAUTION Continue you CONTROLLER medicine And add a RESCUE medicine
You have <u>any</u> of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cough, wheeze, chest tightness• Shortness of breath• You're catching a cold• You're exposed to something that can trigger an attack Peak flow: to	INHALED MEDICATION (HOW MUCH AND WHEN TO TAKE IT) Call your doctor as soon as you can.
BAD 	GET HELP Take these medicines and call your doctor NOW!
Asthma is getting worse fast: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medicine is not helping• Breathing is hard and fast• Nose opens wide• Ribs show Peak flow below	INHALED MEDICATION (HOW MUCH AND WHEN TO TAKE IT) Your doctor will want to see you right away. If you can't contact your doctor, go to the emergency room.

↔ ZONE 1

↔ ZONE 2

↔ ZONE 3

Create a Medication Routine

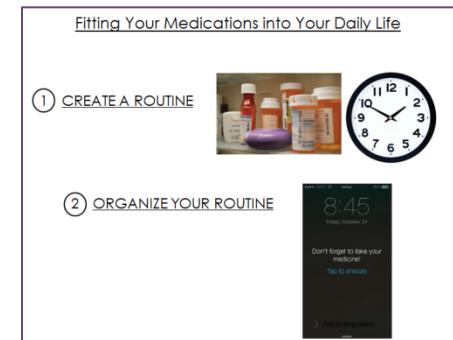
Say: We have already talked about asthma triggers and how to avoid or manage triggers. Another very important part of managing your asthma is your controller medicine(s). Next time we will talk about your medications in more detail, but today I wanted to give you a few tips on how to make taking your medicine part of your daily routine, since I know that it can be hard to remember to take your medicine every day:

Create a routine:

- Store your controller medicine with the rest of your pills, so your medicine is all together in one consistent spot. Make sure your rescue medicine is with you at all times.
- Keep your medicine in a place that will help you remember to take it, like your bathroom.
- Take your other pills at the same time that you take your controller medicine.
- Take your medicine at the same time each day. Try to keep that time the same throughout the week.

Use an organizer to help you set a daily schedule:

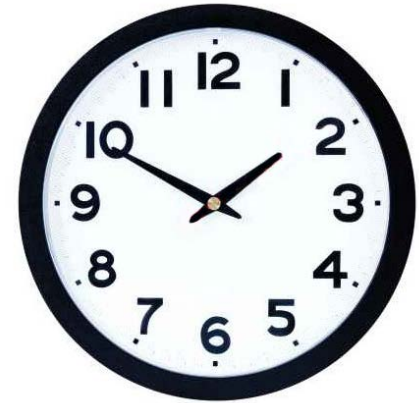
- Write yourself a note or set an alarm on your phone to help you remember to take your medicine.
- Ask your spouse, friend, or caregiver to help you remember.



Ask: Do you ever have problems remembering to take your asthma medications?

Fitting Your Medications into Your Daily Life

① CREATE A ROUTINE



② ORGANIZE YOUR ROUTINE



Session Review:

Say: Great! That's all the information I have for today. Just to review, we talked about the following topics today:

- ✓ What is asthma?
- ✓ What is an asthma attack?
- ✓ Asthma triggers -- Indoor, Outdoor, & Behavioral
- ✓ Asthma Action Plan
- ✓ Fitting Your Medications into Your Daily Life

Say: Remind me, what are some examples of asthma triggers? [Re-review if participant can't recall]

Say: Do you have any other questions about the information we went over? Were there things you learned or didn't know before today? Were there things I didn't talk about that you'd like to discuss at a future visit?