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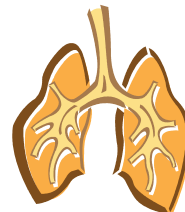
What is asthma?

Definition:

When you have asthma, your airways narrow and swell. They produce extra mucus, and breathing becomes difficult.

Symptoms:

- Dry cough at night, or with laughter, talking or exercise
- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness or pain
- An audible whistling or wheezing sound when exhaling
- Bouts of coughing or wheezing that are worsened by a respiratory virus such as a cold or the flu

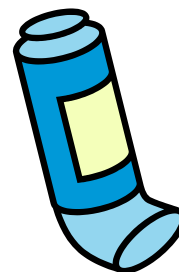


Causes/Triggers:

- Airborne allergens, such as pollen, animal dander, mold, cockroaches and dust mites
- Respiratory infections, such as the common cold
- Physical activity (exercise-induced asthma)
- Cold air
- Air pollutants and irritants, such as smoke
- Certain medications, including beta blockers, aspirin and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
- Strong emotions and stress
- Sulfites, preservatives added to some types of foods and beverages
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), a condition in which stomach acids back up into your throat
- Menstrual cycle in some women
- Allergic reactions to some foods, such as peanuts or shellfish

Tests/Diagnosis:

- Spirometry
- Peak Flow
- Methacholine Challenge or Mannitol Challenge



Treatments:

Prevention and long-term control is the key to preventing asthma attacks. Treatment usually involves learning to recognize and avoid triggers, and if necessary, adding safe and effective preventative medications to keep symptoms under control. In case of an asthma flare-up, you may need to use a quick-relief inhaler such as albuterol.

Call South Bay Allergy and Asthma or go on to our website at southbayallergy.com to schedule an appointment.