

ASTHMA

What is Asthma?

Asthma is defined as a "chronic inflammatory disease of the airway" that causes symptoms of shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, coughing and/or wheezing. Asthma has no set pattern. Its symptoms can be mild, moderate or severe. They can vary from person to person and can flare up from time to time and then not appear for long periods. Symptoms can vary from one episode to the next. The cause of asthma is not known, and currently there is no cure. However, there are many things that can be done to live symptom free. (Source: Asthma Society of Canada <http://www.asthma.ca/>)

Triggers, Avoidance, Action

Inflammation in the airways makes the lungs more sensitive to substances in our environment called "asthma triggers". A variety of factors ("triggers") can affect the sensitive airways in people with asthma and can bring on symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, chest tightness, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, airway inflammation and extra mucus production. Some people may react to one specific trigger whereas it may take several combined triggers before others develop symptoms. Symptoms can be reversed with medication and by reducing exposure to environmental triggers where possible. Some examples of triggers may be: perfume, cologne, hairspray and scented/smelly markers