

Diagnosing Asthma



Module 2 Questions

1. When can asthma start?

- a) At any age, you are never too young or too old to be diagnosed
- b) Only between the ages of 5 and 10
- c) Only when you are a teenager
- d) Only when you are an adult

2. True/False: It's possible to outgrow asthma as you get older.

- a) True
- b) False

3. Which of the following could trigger your asthma?

- a) Smoking
- b) Environmental allergens
- c) Getting a cold
- d) All of the above

4. There are four levels of asthma severity.

- a) True
- b) False



ASTHMA SEVERITY

The severity of your asthma will be determined by the frequency of your symptoms and how often they interfere with your daily activities.

1	Intermittent	symptoms < 2 days a week, sleep disturbance < 2 nights a month
2	Mild Persistent	symptoms \geq 2 days a week, sleep disturbance 2-4 nights a month
3	Moderate Persistent	symptoms every day, sleep disturbance \geq 1 night a week
4	Severe Persistent	symptoms throughout the day, sleep disturbance every night

Diagnoses



START

- Asthma can start at any age. If you experience asthma symptoms, plan to see your doctor.
- You can outgrow asthma as you get older.

TELL

- Tell your doctor if you have a history of eczema or allergies (atopic march) or exposed to environmental factors.
- Family history of asthma also increases risk.

DIAGNOSE

- A healthcare professional can diagnose asthma and help you develop an action plan to manage your asthma.

TESTING FOR ASTHMA



Allergy Testing

An allergist can conduct skin or blood allergy tests to help determine if allergies may be contributing to the underlying causes of your asthma.



Spirometry

This is a breathing test done in the clinic that determines lung functioning by measuring lung capacity, how much air is moving in and out of your lungs, and how fast you can exhale.

ASTHMA TRIGGERS

Triggers can be anything that might cause an asthma attack or flare. They vary from person to person so identify them early!

Allergies (Environmental)

- Dust mites: wash bedding weekly; dust mite encasement for mattress and pillows
- Pollen: limit time outside during high pollen seasons, shower after exposure
- Mold: use a dehumidifier, anti-mold measures
- Pet dander: keep pets out of room, wash them weekly
- Person with allergies should not vacuum/dust

Irritants

- E.g smog, smoke, dust.
- No smoking in the house or around the person with asthma
- Avoid exposure to campfires

Weather

- Use AC for days with humidity or high levels of smog

Exercise

- Only exercise outside when air quality is good
- Properly warm up and cool down before and after your workout

Infections

- Get vaccines for respiratory viruses
- Don't share items that can easily spread germs (cups, utensils, towels, etc)

LIVING WITH ASTHMA

- Asthma can be treated. Symptoms can disappear as you get older, but they have the potential to return.
- Continue to follow up with your doctor. Asthma symptoms can change as your immune system continues to develop throughout your life.



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