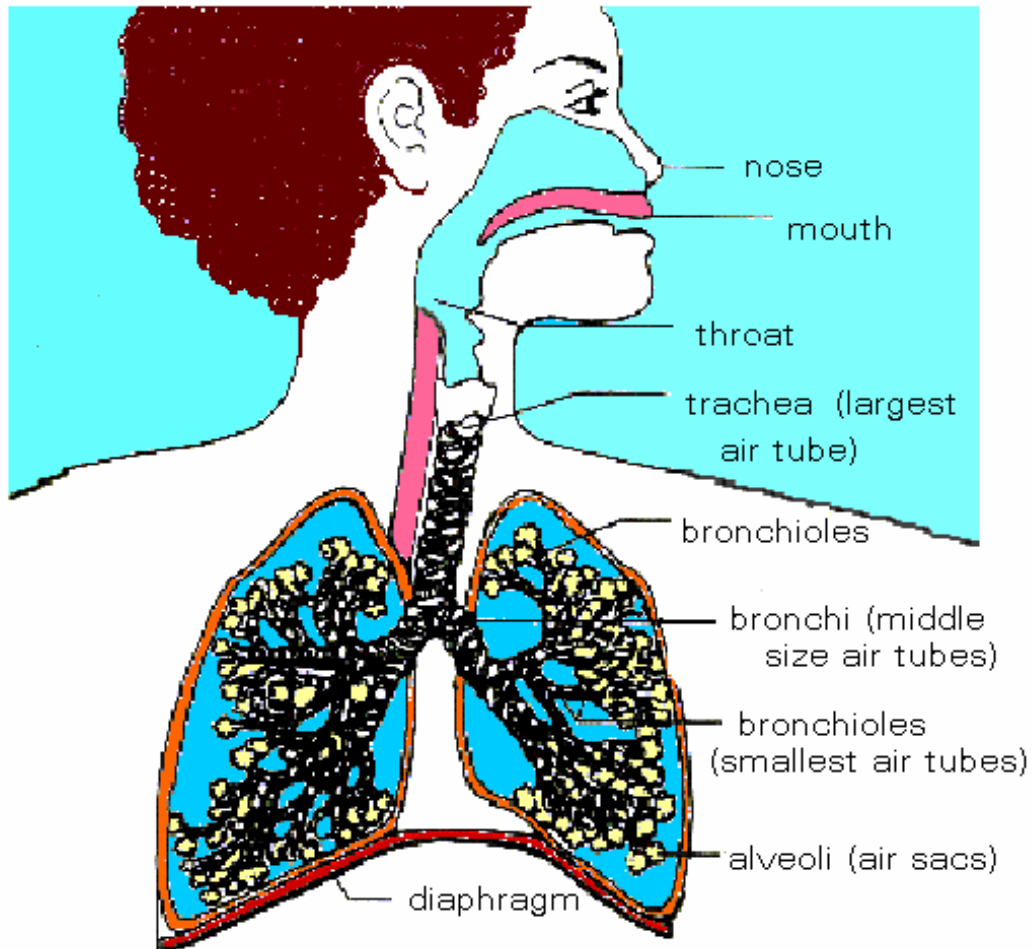


ASTHMA WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Define asthma
- Review what happens during an asthma attack
- Recognize the symptoms of an asthma attack
- Describe the causes and triggers of asthma
- Understand general treatment and management practices for asthma
- Explain steps to reduce the frequency of asthma episodes and minimize asthma triggers in the home
- Review who is affected by asthma
- Practice techniques to promote asthma awareness in the community

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

Asthma is a chronic lung disease, which leads to difficulty in breathing. Asthma is a disease of the respiratory system. Your respiratory system is made up of your nose and mouth, windpipe (also called trachea), lungs, and a bunch of air tubes (or airways) that connect your nose and mouth with your lungs.

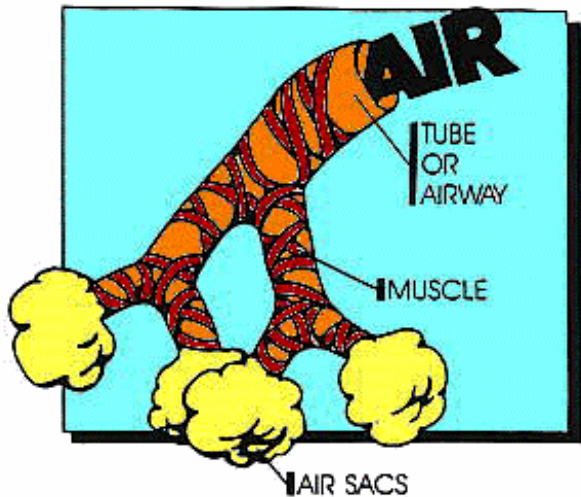


The primary function of the respiratory system is to bring oxygen into the interior of the lungs, transfer it to the blood and remove waste particles, in the form of carbon dioxide.

Source: Children's Medical Center of the University of Virginia

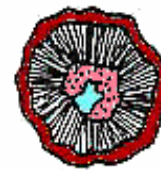
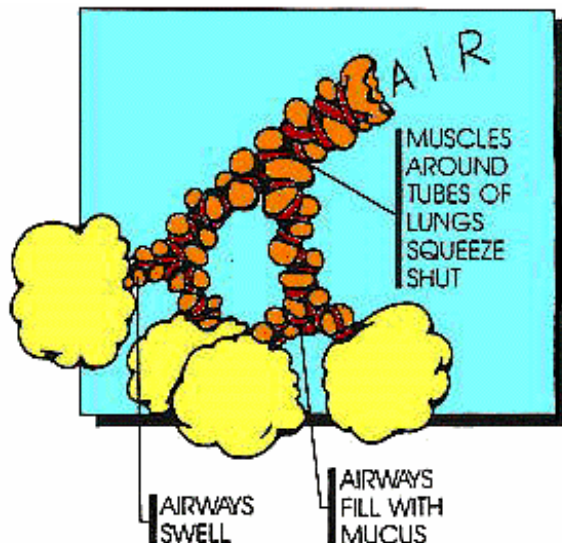
LUNGS BEFORE AND DURING AN ASTHMA ATTACK

The picture below shows what lungs look like when everything is working normally. The muscles that are wrapped around the airways are very thin and loose, and the airway is wide open. This makes it easy to move air in and out of the air sacs.



NORMAL AIRWAY

Look at the picture below. During an asthma attack, the muscles around the airways tighten, or "spasm." The lining inside the airways swell or thicken, and get clogged with lots of thick mucous. The airways are much narrower than usual under these conditions, making it difficult to breathe.



BLOCKED AIRWAY

Source: Children's Medical Center of the University of Virginia

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR ASTHMA



See your doctor every 6 months.

Community health clinics and local health department offices offer low-cost or free medical services.

Take your asthma medicines exactly as your doctor tells you.

- ✓ There are 2 kinds of medicines for asthma
 - ① those that help with the long-term control of asthma
 - ② those that give short-term quick relief from asthma symptoms
- ✗ Never replace your asthma medication with home remedies
For example, vaporizing ointments or herbal products like chamomile tea do not alleviate asthma symptoms and could delay appropriate medical attention.



Stay away from or control things that make your asthma worse.



Keep your house clean and free of asthma triggers, like tobacco smoke, mold, dust mites and cockroaches.



Enjoy a healthy diet, get plenty of rest and exercise regularly.

When their asthma is adequately controlled, asthmatic children can run and play with other children. Exercise and physical activities increase pulmonary strength, improve respiration and can decrease the severity of asthma attacks.



Watch for signs that your asthma is getting worse and act quickly.

- 🔔 For example, if you feel your chest tighten or have difficulty breathing, and your quick-relief medicines have not helped, then call your doctor or go to the hospital **IMMEDIATELY!**
- 🔔 If your child has an asthma attack, help him to relax and feel comfortable. Give him his asthma medicines. If the quick-relief medicines don't help or if he doesn't have asthma medicines prescribed by a doctor, seek medical attention **IMMEDIATELY!**



Special Care for Babies with Asthma

Babies with asthma need special care. A baby's lungs are not as strong as those of an older child. As a result, a severe asthma attack in an infant can quickly result in lung failure.

Symptoms in a baby

- Breathing rate increases (over 40 breaths/minute when asleep)
- Skin between ribs pulled tight
- Chest enlargement
- Coloring of face becomes pale or red
- Crying becomes softer and shorter than normal
- Nostrils open wider
- Makes grunting noises



During an asthma attack:

- ✓ Immediately administer asthma medication prescribed by doctor
- ✓ If he has no asthma medication, take the infant to the emergency room

During an asthma attack:

- × DON'T give infant large amounts of liquids to drink
- × DON'T make infant breathe warm, moist air
- × DON'T make infant breathe into a paper bag
- × DON'T give infant over-the-counter antihistamines or cold remedies

*Source: National Council of La Raza
Center for Health Promotion*