

AMBER HEALTH BITES

DIABETES AND FOOT CARE

Diabetes and Foot Care?

Foot care amongst diabetics is incredibly important as foot related complications are common for those of us with diabetes.

Foot ulcers for example, which affect as many as 1 out of 10 people with diabetes, can all too easily develop from blisters and small wounds to posing a threat of amputation.

Even small ulcers on the foot can represent a serious risk: they may heal extremely slowly and need rigorous treatment to cure.

Ulcers can develop into serious lower body infections, with the possibility of amputation at an advanced stage.

Caring for your feet

Caring for your feet as a diabetic should not be difficult, and should be a prime consideration.

This section details complications that may affect the diabetic foot, and some methods and information about care.

Why is foot care important?

The presence of high blood glucose levels over a long period of time may result in a condition called diabetic neuropathy (damage to the nerves) or loss of circulation in the extremities of the body.

If the nerves in your feet or legs are damaged, your feet can lose sensation and become numb.

It is relatively common for people with diabetes to not feel foot problems until they have developed, therefore it is key to ensure you have regular foot examinations.

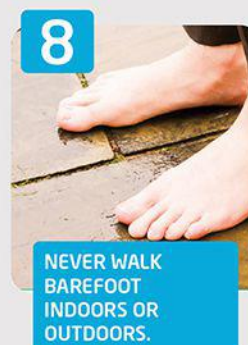
Diabetic foot complications include:

- Foot ulcers - open wounds on the foot
- Charcot foot - deformation of the foot
- Amputation

Caring for your feet

Foot care involves reducing damage from occurring to your feet and regularly checking your feet for any signs of damage.

Damage to your feet can be reduced by avoiding walking barefoot, wearing correctly fitting footwear and keeping your feet clean and in good condition. Check your feet every day for any signs of damage.



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WHAT IS ASTHMA

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a chronic disease of the airways (breathing tubes) in the lungs, it's characterized by recurrent attacks of breathlessness and wheezing, which vary in severity and frequency from person to person.

This means that you have asthma even when you feel fine and that your asthma can flare up at any time.

Statistics

According to WHO some 235 million people currently suffer from asthma.

There were 383 000 deaths due to Asthma in 2015

- Asthma is one of the major Non-Communicable diseases.
- It is a common disease among children. Some children with milder forms of asthma outgrow their symptoms with age.
- Most deaths occur in older adults.
- Most asthma-related deaths occur in low- and lower-middle income countries.
- Medication can control asthma. Avoiding asthma triggers can also reduce the severity of asthma.

How Does Asthma affect the airways?

Asthma affects the airways in these ways:

- Walls of the airways are more swollen. This is called inflammation.
- The airways are also extra sensitive, meaning that they react to certain things that you breathe in. Muscles around the airways can easily tighten and squeeze down.
- The airways make more thick and sticky mucus.

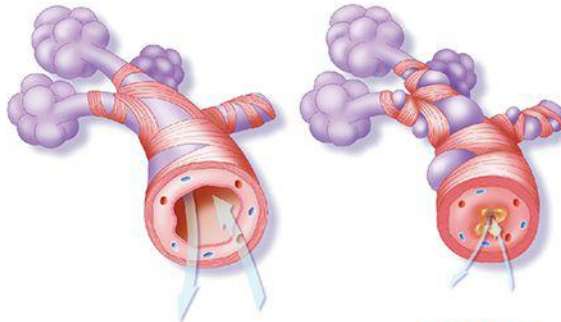
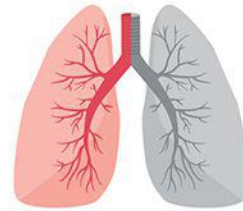
All of these changes make the airways narrow, so it is hard for air to go in and out of your lungs. This can make it hard to breathe and cause other asthma symptoms like coughing and wheezing.

There is no cure for asthma, but there is a lot you can do to control your asthma so that you can live a normal, active life and sleep through the night without asthma problems.

What are the symptoms of Asthma?

Symptoms are what you feel in your body. Symptoms may occur several times in a day or week in affected individuals, and for some people become worse during physical activity or at night. Everybody is different, but here are some common Asthma symptoms:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath Wheezing
- Chest tightness or chest pain.



NORMAL

ASTHMA



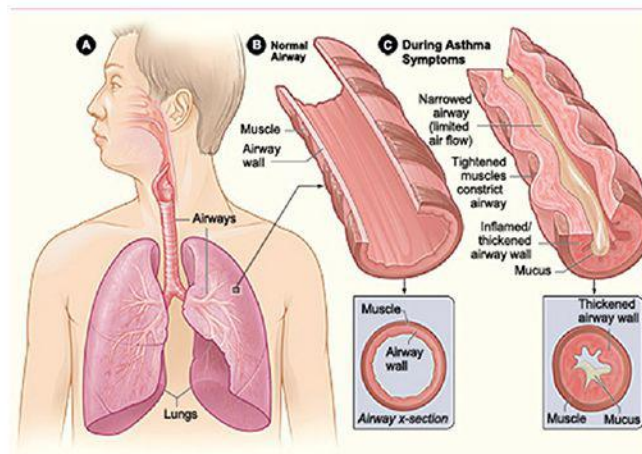
What triggers Asthma?

The strongest risk factors for developing asthma are inhaled substances and particles that may provoke allergic reactions or irritate the airways.

Some causes and triggers are common to all people with asthma, and some are more individual. Although the fundamental causes of asthma are not completely understood, the strongest risk factors for developing asthma are a combination of genetic predisposition with environmental exposure to inhaled substances and particles that may provoke allergic reactions or irritate the airways, such as:

- Indoor allergens (for example house dust mites in bedding, carpets and stuffed furniture, pollution and pet dander);
- Outdoor allergens (such as pollens and moulds);
- Tobacco smoke; and
- Chemical irritants in the workplace.
- Other triggers can include cold air,
- Extreme emotional arousal such as anger or fear, and physical exercise.

In some people, asthma can even be triggered by certain medications, such as aspirin and other non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs, and beta-blockers (which are used to treat high blood pressure, heart conditions and migraine).



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Management of Asthma

The goal of medicines and changes in lifestyle are to reduce the effects asthma may have on your quality of life. Although asthma cannot be cured, appropriate management can control the disease and enable people to enjoy good quality of life.

Medicines can be given to stop or control chronic inflammation in the air tubes and prevent asthma attacks. Short-term medications are used to relieve symptoms also called as rescue medicines, they open the air tubes and are given to all people with asthma to inhale when breathing problems occur.

Medications such as inhaled corticosteroids are needed to control the progression of severe asthma and reduce asthma exacerbation and deaths. People with persistent symptoms must take long-term medication daily to control the underlying inflammation and prevent symptoms and exacerbations. Medication is not the only way to control asthma. It is also important to avoid asthma triggers - stimuli that irritate and inflame the airways.

With medical support, each asthma patient must learn what triggers he or she should avoid.

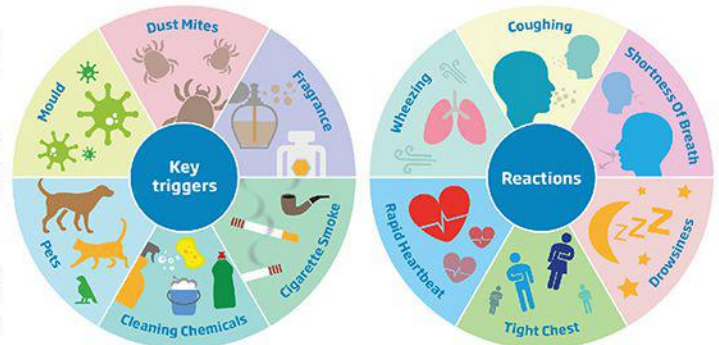
Although asthma does not kill on the scale of other chronic diseases, failure to use appropriate medications or to adhere to treatment can lead to death. Inadequate access to medicines and health services is one of the important reasons for the poor control of asthma in many settings.

How to Diagnose Asthma

A health care provider will ask questions about your breathing and check your lungs and heart during an exam. A chest x ray and breathing tests may be ordered to help make the diagnosis of asthma. If sinus problems, allergies or acid reflux are causing your breathing problems, other tests and treatments will be needed. The test results and how often you are having breathing problems will determine how severe your asthma may be.

What can you do to control your asthma and prevent symptoms?

1. Follow your Asthma Action Plan, even when you are feeling well.
2. Try to stay away from things that make your asthma worse.
3. Talk to your doctor if you have more symptoms than usual or need to use your quick-relief medicine more often



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What are Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) and how are they transmitted?

More than 30 different bacteria, viruses and parasites are known to be transmitted through sexual contact. Eight of these pathogens are linked to the greatest incidence of sexually transmitted disease. Of these 8 infections, 4 are currently curable: Syphilis, Gonorrhoea, Chlamydia and Trichomoniasis. The other 4 are viral infections and are incurable: Hepatitis B, Herpes Simplex virus (HSV or herpes), HIV, and Human papillomavirus (HPV). Symptoms or disease due to the incurable viral infections can be reduced or modified through early detection and treatment. STIs are spread predominantly by sexual contact, including vaginal, anal and oral sex. Some STIs can also be spread through non-sexual means such as via blood or blood products. Many STIs—including chlamydia, gonorrhoea, primarily hepatitis B, HIV, and syphilis—can also be transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy and childbirth. A person can have an STI without having obvious symptoms of disease. Common symptoms of STIs include vaginal discharge, urethral discharge or burning in men, genital ulcers, and abdominal pain.

Facts:

- More than 1 million sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are acquired every day worldwide.
- Each year, there are an estimated 357 million new infections with 1 of 4 STIs: chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and trichomoniasis.
- More than 500 million people are estimated to have genital infection with herpes simplex virus (HSV).
- More than 290 million women have a human papillomavirus (HPV) infection¹.
- The majority of STIs have no symptoms or only mild symptoms that may not be recognized as an STI.
- STIs such as HSV type 2 and syphilis can increase the risk of HIV acquisition.
- Over 900 000 pregnant women were infected with syphilis resulting in approximately 350 000 adverse birth outcomes including stillbirth in 2012.
- In some cases, STIs can have serious reproductive health consequences beyond the immediate impact of the infection itself (e.g., infertility or mother-to-child transmission)

SPEAK TO YOUR DOCTOR FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THESE TESTS



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