



YOUR CHILD'S HOME FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS

ASTHMA 101

What is Asthma? What does this mean for my child?

This handout will explain some asthma basics to help you and your child better understand Asthma. It is often overwhelming and puzzling when your child suddenly or repeatedly needs breathing treatments in our office. Our goal is to partner with parents and caregivers to take care of your child's Asthma. In order to do this, a basic understanding of ASTHMA is important.

So what is it??

Asthma has two parts:

1. Airway inflammation
2. Bronchospasm

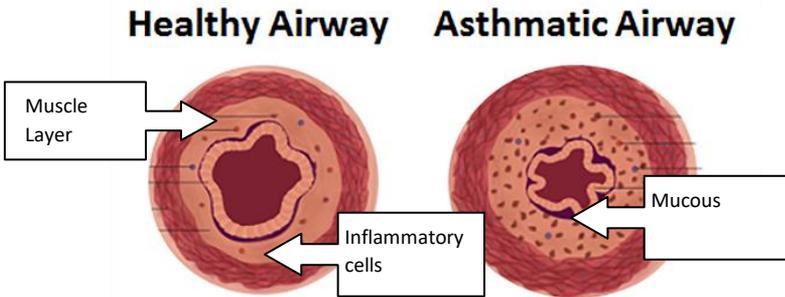
Airway inflammation is the underlying or "QUIET" part of Asthma. Someone who has asthma has inflammatory cells in the muscle layer around their airways or breathing tubes. These cells make the muscle layer "reactive" or twitchy.

Bronchospasm is the result of these inflammatory cells irritating the reactive muscle layer. This is the

NOISY part of Asthma-when the muscle squeezes down and mucus gets trapped. This causes your child to cough repeatedly, wheeze, gag on mucus, and work harder to breathe.

The bronchospasm or “noisy symptoms” of having Asthma are what brought you to the office today. This is what we are treating today and over the next several days. The inflammation or “quiet part” is the culprit we want to address/treat so we can PREVENT your child from having further Asthma episodes.

The “name of the game” is *Asthma Prevention* and ending the need to “rescue” your child from asthma symptoms.



What does “rescue” mean?

We *rescue* by giving a medication called Albuterol to relieve the bronchospasm. The medication essentially tells the muscle to stop squeezing your child’s airway. Albuterol can be given either by MDI (an inhaler form) or through a nebulizer machine. It

is important to keep in mind that an Asthma episode can put your child's health at **risk**.

Asthma is unpredictable-it can become serious at any time. Asthma can be deadly. We want to **prevent** breathing trouble and keep your child **safe** from this unpredictable condition.

So how do we PREVENT this?

We **PREVENT** bronchospasm once this episode is under control. We will start a **DAILY** medication to *prevent or control* the underlying culprit-**the inflammation**. Remember, these inflammatory cell in the muscle are what trigger the bronchospasm. Control these cells and prevent the asthma episodes and symptoms. *Even when your child is not coughing and wheezing, the QUIET part of Asthma is lurking.* Just like when you go to the dentist-they say "good job, no cavities" you keep brushing your teeth twice a day to prevent decay. Same game-instead we are preventing Asthma flare ups.

Your provider will make a decision at your follow-up Asthma visit based on history, frequency and severity of symptoms as to what daily medication is best for your child. For children 5 or older, we can measure their lung functions which will further guide us in the choices. Your provider will continue Asthma Education by explaining triggers, provide you with as Asthma Care Plan and address other

problems that can be further explored at later asthma control visits.

What does this mean for my child?

Together, we can manage or control this chronic underlying inflammation in a safe and easy way. It does take *daily care*. It means your child can be healthy and spared from the ongoing symptoms, missed days of school, visits to the emergency room and admission to the hospital. He or she can participate in any sport and have a normal lung function with proper care.

If your child begins to have difficulty breathing, please call 911 or seek help at the nearest emergency room as this can be life threatening.

If you have any questions between now and your next Asthma follow-up visit, please contact our office at 706-216-2771.

Patient Name: _____