

Asthma and Physical Activity



Exercise and physical activity are important for good health. This is true even when you have asthma. Exercise keeps your heart and lungs healthy. Exercise improves lung capacity and blood flow to your lungs.

There are ways that exercise may cause problems when you have asthma. They include:

- **Faster breathing.** Exercise can make you breathe faster. This may cause asthma symptoms. Or an asthma attack.
- **Poor air quality.** This can also trigger asthma symptoms. Ozone, air pollution, and particles in the air can all trigger asthma symptoms in some people. Keep this in mind before taking part in outdoor sports or exercise.
- **Pollen and allergies.** People with asthma who also have allergies may have more trouble when exercising outdoors at certain times of the year.
- **Cold or dry air.** Some people with asthma may have worse symptoms when exercising in cold weather or dry air.
- **Intense sports.** You may have asthma symptoms with sports that are intense or last a long time. These include sports, such as basketball and soccer, and other activities with long periods of running.

Tips to manage exercising with asthma:

- Before you start any exercise program or sport, talk with your healthcare provider. They may recommend that you take medicine before exercising.
- Try activities that are done in warmer temperatures or only use short bursts of energy, such as swimming, walking, hiking, baseball, and golf.
- Wear a scarf or mask over your mouth when you exercise in cold weather.
- Always warm up and cool down.
- Keep your quick-relief inhaler with you when exercising.

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