Here’s a concise overview of **asthma**, including its **causes**, **symptoms**, and **prevention**, organized in three paragraphs:

**Causes:**  
Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition triggered by inflammation and narrowing of the airways, making breathing difficult. Common causes include exposure to allergens like pollen, dust mites, mold, pet dander, and environmental irritants such as smoke, pollution, and strong odors. It can also be triggered by respiratory infections, cold air, physical activity (especially in cold weather), and stress. Genetic factors play a role too—people with a family history of asthma or allergies are at a higher risk of developing the condition.

**Symptoms:**  
Asthma symptoms vary from person to person but often include wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, and persistent coughing—especially at night, early morning, or after physical activity. During an asthma attack, the symptoms intensify and can be life-threatening if not treated promptly. Some people experience mild, occasional symptoms, while others may suffer from frequent and severe flare-ups that require urgent medical attention.

**Prevention:**  
While asthma cannot be cured, its symptoms can be effectively managed and prevented with the right strategies. Avoiding known triggers is crucial—this may involve using air purifiers, keeping living areas clean, and avoiding smoking or secondhand smoke. Medications such as inhaled corticosteroids and bronchodilators help control inflammation and open the airways. Regular check-ups, following an asthma action plan, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle—including exercise and managing stress—are essential in reducing the frequency and severity of asthma attacks.