

LEVELED BOOK • N

# Asthma



Written by Gabrielle Fimbres

[www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com)



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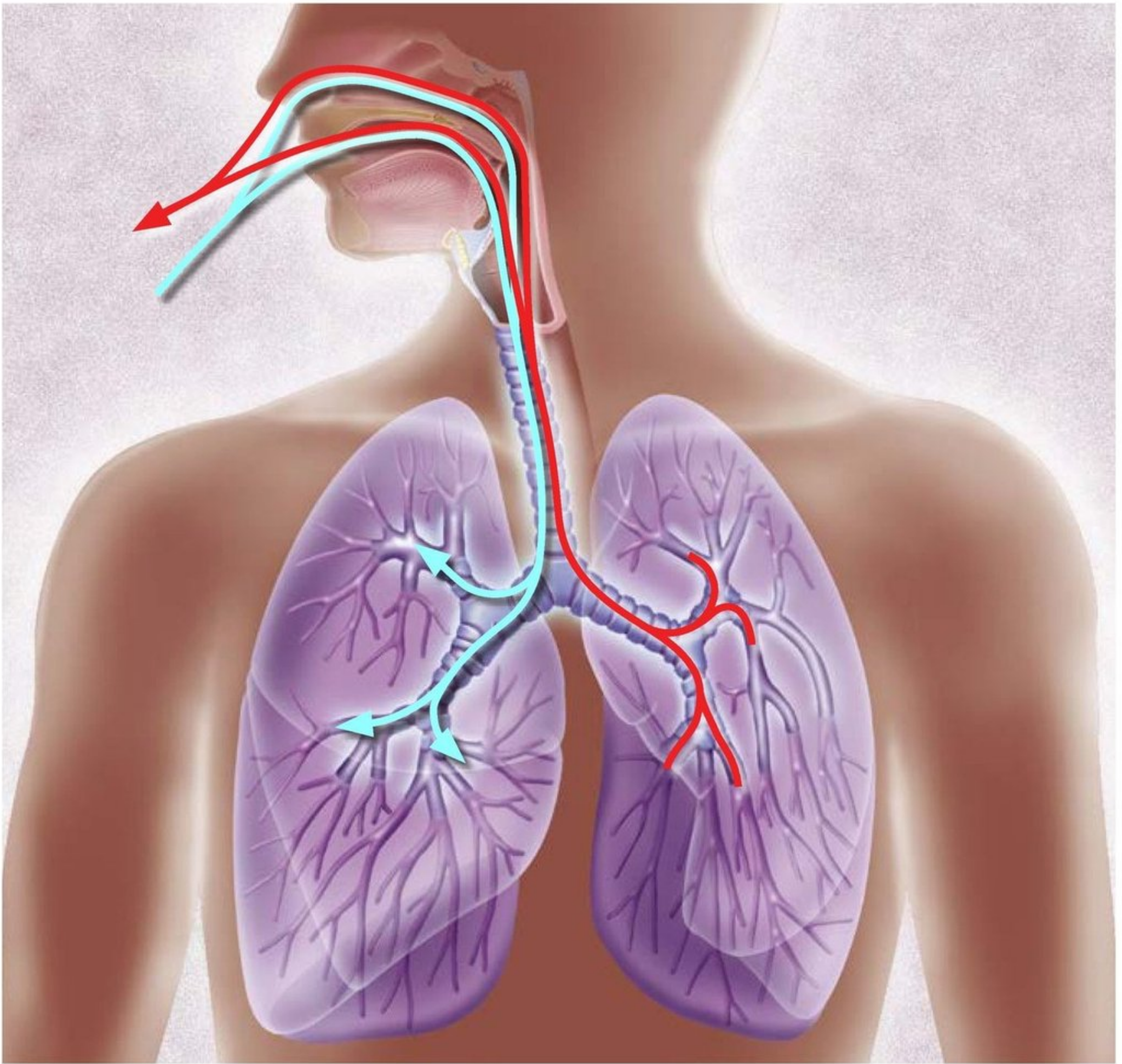




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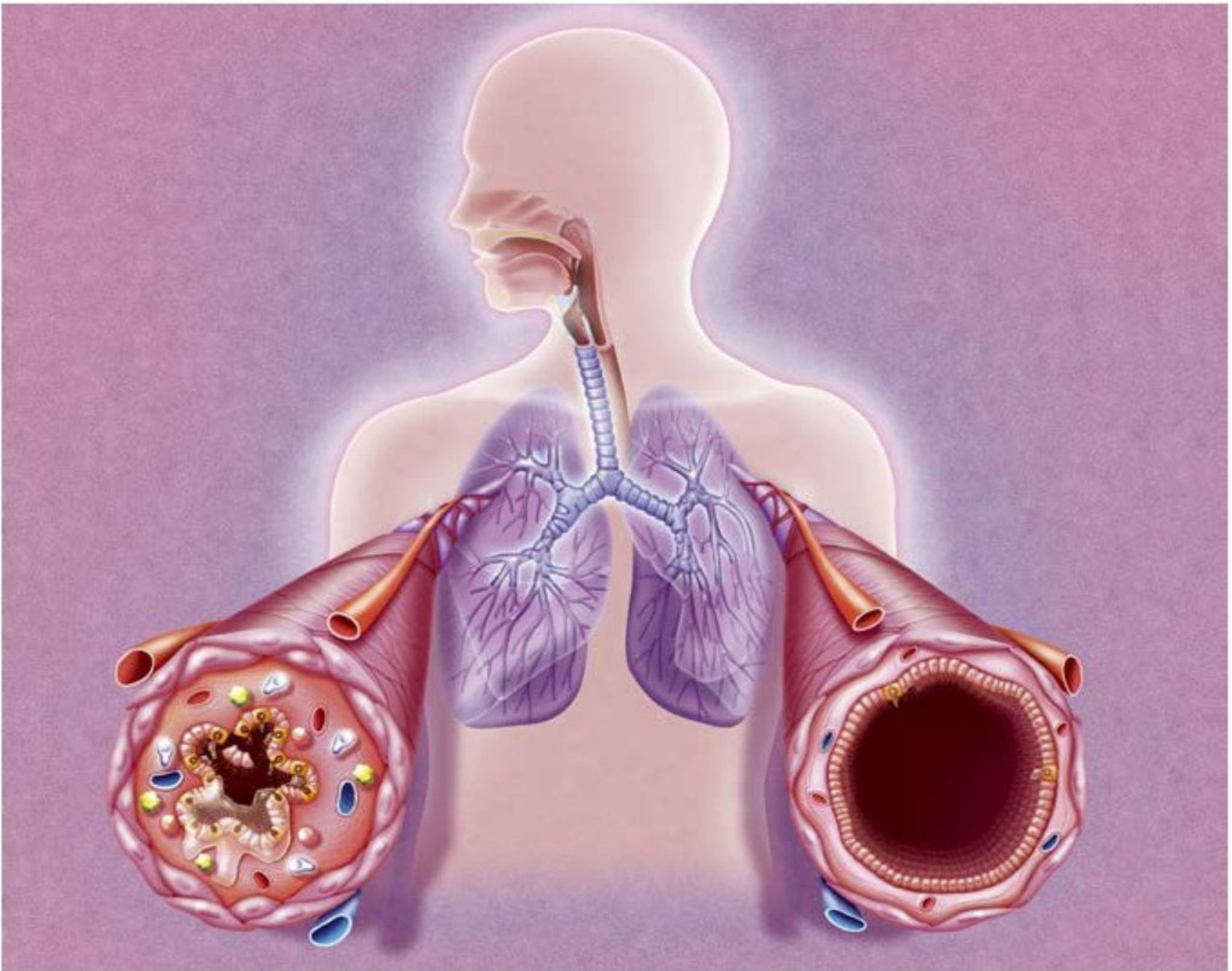


Special tubes carry air into and out of the lungs.

## What Is Asthma?

Asthma is a **disease** that makes it difficult for a person to breathe. When people breathe, air makes its way through the nose or mouth to the lungs. Air moves in and out of the lungs through special tubes.

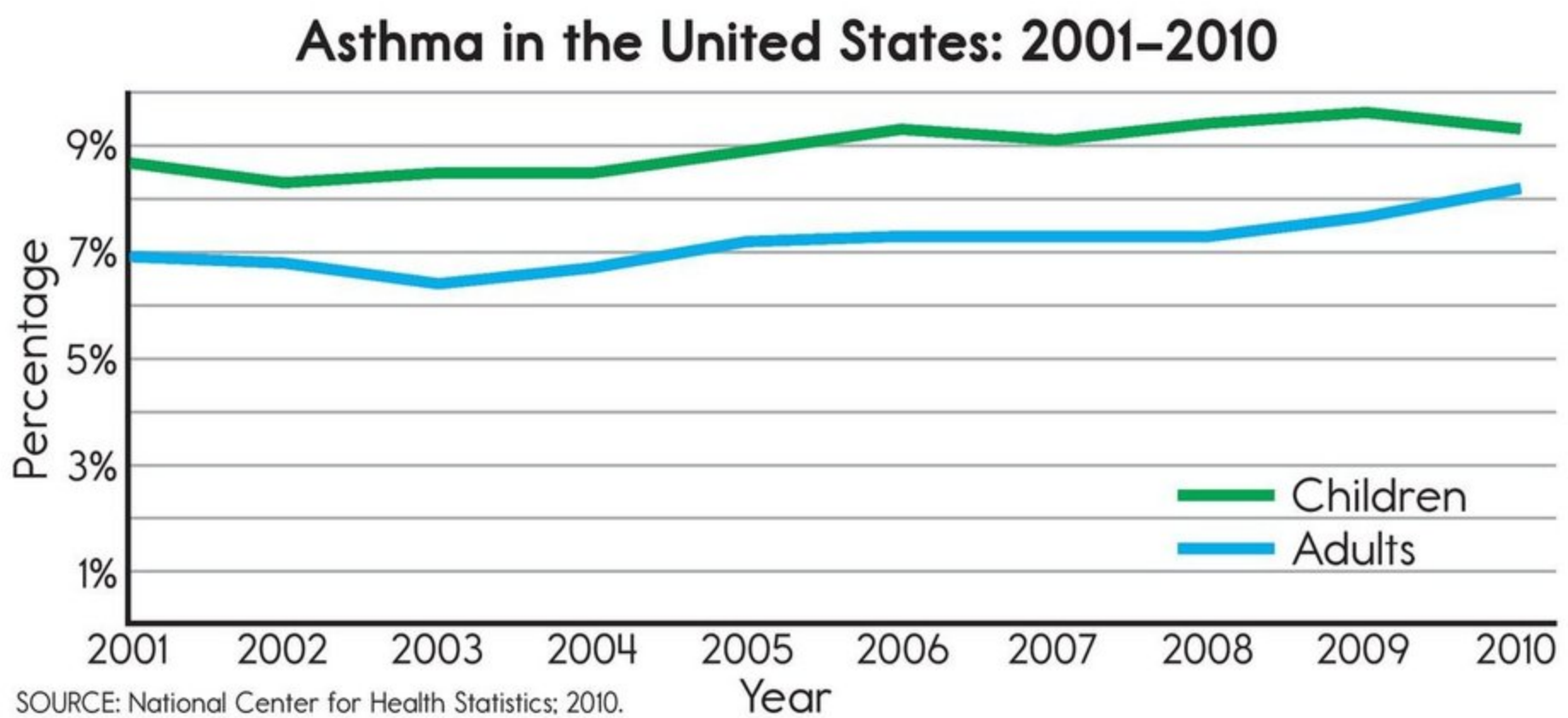




On the right is a normal tube that carries air into and out of the lungs. On the left is one of these tubes during an asthma attack.

These tubes swell and become narrow during an asthma attack. Because of this, less air moves into and out of the lungs. People with asthma might **wheeze** or cough. Their chest might feel tight. They may have a hard time breathing. A bad asthma attack can last for days or even cause death.



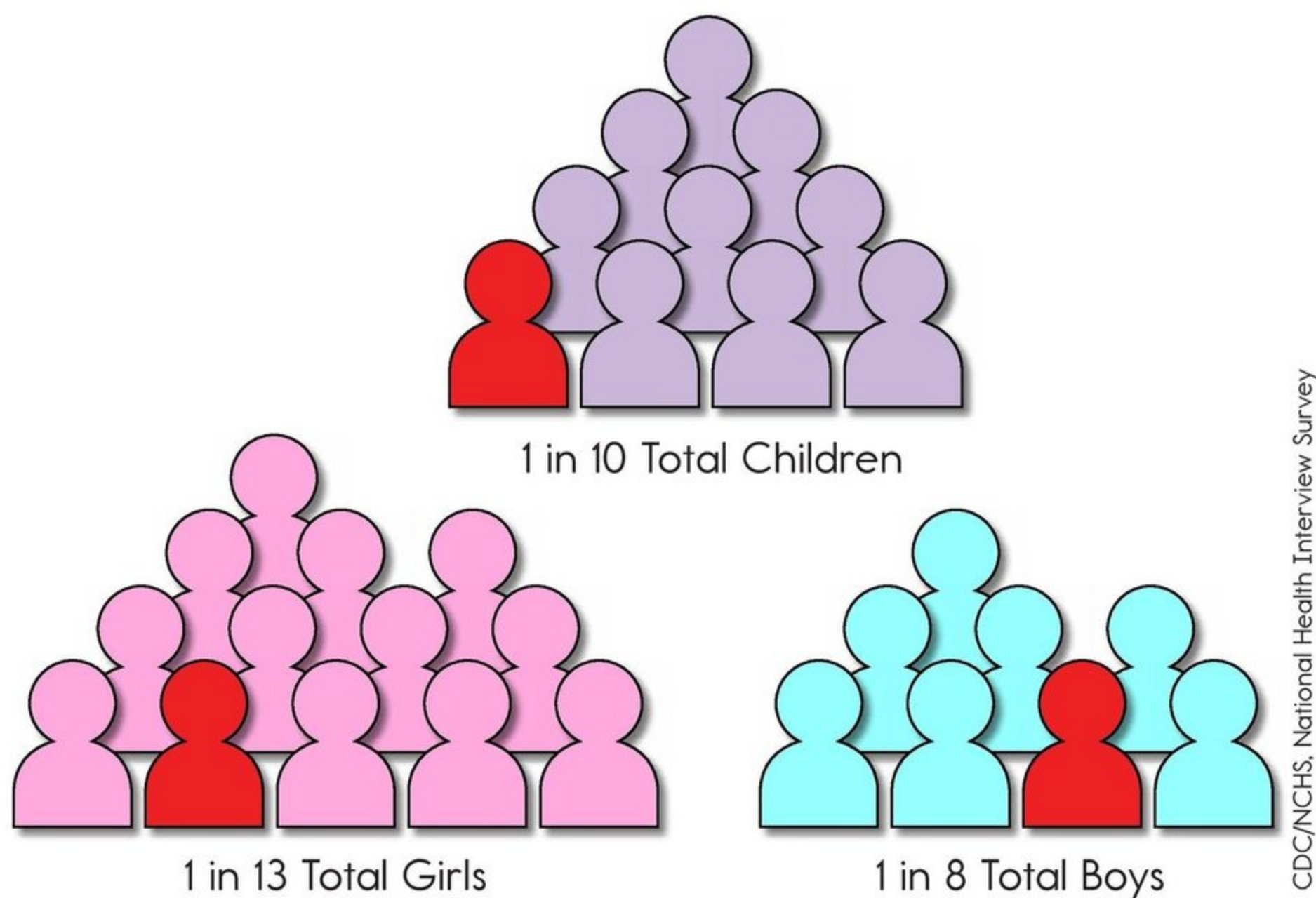


## People with Asthma

About 235 million children and adults around the world have asthma. Asthma can show up in a person at any age. About one child out of every ten in the United States has asthma. About half of these children will see their asthma get better as they grow older. However, their **symptoms** often return when they become older adults. One adult in twelve has asthma. Each year, more people in the United States and around the world get asthma.



## Children Under Age 15 with Asthma in the United States: 2009



Doctors do not know how people get asthma. They do know that it cannot be passed from one person to another like a cold. However, the disease often runs in families. If both parents have asthma, their children are more likely to have it. People who are around cigarette smoke are also more likely to develop asthma.





The things in these images are common triggers for an asthma attack.

## The Causes of Attacks

Many things can cause asthma attacks. These **triggers** are different from person to person. Dust, animals, pollen, or mold can cause an attack for many people. Cigarette smoke, fumes from cars, and other strong smells are also common triggers. Coming down with a cold or the flu can often bring on an attack as well. Exercise can cause an asthma attack in some people.





Following an action plan is important to staying healthy.

## **Keeping Asthma Under Control**

Most people with asthma learn to control the disease. They often start by meeting with their doctor to create an action plan. Each person's action plan is a little different. It can include a person's triggers and how to avoid them. It can also include the kinds of medicines a person uses and how to use them correctly.





Inhalers are small so people can carry them around.

People use different medicines to control asthma. Some people take pills every day. Others may take pills only when they feel the symptoms of asthma. Many people use **inhalers**. These devices spray a **mist** of medicine that is breathed in. Inhalers may be used daily or only when a person has an asthma attack.





## Do You Know?

Some people use a nebulizer (NEB-yuh-ly-zer) to control asthma. Like inhalers, these machines deliver a mist of medicine that is breathed in. Unlike inhalers, these machines use power and can deliver larger amounts of medicine over a longer time.





Another important part of keeping asthma under control is staying healthy. Exercise, a healthy diet, and plenty of sleep can help keep asthma under control.





Jerome Bettis kisses the Super Bowl trophy he helped the Pittsburgh Steelers win in 2006.

## Living with Asthma

People with asthma can do anything that anyone else can. Many famous athletes have asthma. Jerome “The Bus” Bettis was fourteen when doctors told him he had asthma. It did not stop him from becoming a Super Bowl champion.





Amy Van Dyken celebrates after winning a gold medal at the Olympic Games in 1996.

Amy Van Dyken was an Olympic swimmer for the United States. She has asthma and won six gold medals. When she was a child, her doctor said that she should start swimming to make her lungs stronger.





John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, had asthma.

People with asthma have climbed the tallest mountains. They have explored the deep waters of the ocean. They have led countries and made discoveries that have changed the world. With an action plan and a healthy lifestyle, asthma doesn't have to slow anyone down.



## Glossary

<b>disease</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	an illness (p. 4)
<b>inhalers</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	devices that allow a person to breathe in medicine (p. 10)
<b>mist</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	a fine spray of liquid (p. 10)
<b>symptoms</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	specific signs of illness or injury (p. 6)
<b>triggers</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	things that cause a process or reaction to take place (p. 8)
<b>wheeze</b> ( <i>v.</i> )	to make a rattling or whistling sound while breathing as a result of partially blocked air passages (p. 5)



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