

## LIFESTYLE CHANGES FOR BETTER ASTHMA MANAGEMENT

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Making healthy choices everyday can help limit your asthma flare-ups. It's never too late to start making positive changes.

If you smoke, now is the time to quit. Your healthcare provider can recommend several methods that might be right for you. And stay away from second-hand smoke. That, too, can irritate and damage your airways.

Managing your weight is also very important when you have asthma. Extra weight causes your heart and lungs to work harder and can increase your symptoms. If you are overweight, your healthcare provider can recommend healthy ways to help you to lose those extra pounds, such as increasing your level of physical activity and eating healthy.

Getting into a routine of regular physical activity can go a long way in helping you reach your weight goals and improve your overall health. Check with your provider on which exercises are best for you.

Drink plenty of water, especially during exercise. Proper hydration keeps your body's cells functioning properly and helps keep the mucus in your airways loose. Eight glasses of water a day is recommended.

Healthy food choices include adding more fruits and vegetables to your meals and snacks, limiting your use of salt or sodium, and choosing fresh foods more often than processed ones.

Making new choices in what you eat might lead you to try new foods. But be aware if you start to develop a mild reaction during or after eating something new. Talk to your healthcare provider; you may have found a new trigger.

Talk to your healthcare provider about other ways you can improve your eating habits to benefit your overall health.

Another change in lifestyle that can help manage your asthma symptoms is to get plenty of rest. When you feel out of breath or become tired, stop what you're doing and sit down. Rest helps to keep your airways relaxed and allows you to breathe easier.

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Making healthy lifestyle choices to avoid becoming ill is also important. This is important because your airways are always sensitive, even when you are healthy. But the congestion, coughing, and muscle aches from an illness can contribute to an attack.

Habits like washing your hands often, getting proper sleep at night, and avoiding people with a cold or the flu can all help. Be sure to ask your provider if regular flu and pneumonia vaccines are right for you.

Talk to your healthcare provider about your lifestyle. Together, you can decide which healthy changes you can make to help yourself better manage your asthma.

Then choose one change, make a plan, and start taking steps toward a healthier lifestyle and better asthma management.