

What Is Asthma?

If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with asthma, learning more about it can help you feel better—both physically and mentally.

Asthma causes your airways to swell and become narrow. Mucus can also build up along your airways. As a result, air can't move in and out of your lungs very well, making it hard to breathe.

Certain things—like dust, pollen, or smoke—can irritate your airways even more. These triggers can lead to a flare-up, or asthma attack.

When you have asthma, you may have these symptoms: an ongoing cough, tightness in the chest, shortness of breath, and wheezing.

During a flare-up, these symptoms get worse.

Asthma is a long-term, or chronic, lung problem. It can't be cured. But you can do many things to help you breathe better and prevent an asthma flare-up. And your care team is ready to show you how!

Consider asking about: treatment options, like inhaler medicines; ways to avoid your asthma triggers; lifestyle changes that can ease your symptoms, like losing weight or quitting smoking, if needed; and emotional support resources, like a support group where you can connect with others who have asthma.

Your care team will help you make a plan to manage asthma. They are here to support and guide you, so you feel your best and avoid flare-ups.