

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HEALTH CENTER

-HEALTHBERRY-
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ASTHMA

Asthma is a chronic allergic disorder characterized by recurrent attacks of wheezing and shortness of breath. It affects all ages, but 50% of the cases are in children under age 10. Boys with asthma outnumber girls. In adult onset asthma, women are more often affected than men. An asthma attack is caused by spasm of the air passages (bronchi and bronchioles), followed by swelling of the passages and thickening of the lung secretions. Bronchial plugging by mucous can occur and can be life threatening. These changes are caused by allergens such as pollen, dust, animal dander, molds, foods, lung infections, air irritants, smoke, occupational chemicals, drugs, and stresses.

Most people have seen asthma attacks. The most frequent signs and symptoms are chest tightness, shortness of breath, wheezing upon exhalation, coughing, rapid shallow breathing, and prominent utilization of accessory muscles of respiration; bluish discoloration of the skin; exhaustion; inability to speak; restlessness; and confusion.

In addition to avoiding known allergens, an asthmatic should take prescribed preventive medicines regularly, and strive to be in the best physical condition possible. General treatment measures include laboratory tests when applicable, pulmonary function tests, allergy testing, psychotherapy, counseling; and the elimination of allergens and irritants at home and at work. Medications which may be indicated include expectorants, bronchodilators, steroids, antihistamines, and antibiotics.

At the University of Houston Health Clinic, we have equipment for emergency treatment of asthmatic attacks.

We at the Health Center will be happy to help you.



Healthfully yours,

Dr. Healthberry

For questions or comments you can;

Write "Healthberry" at
University Health Center
100 UH Health Center
Houston, Texas 77204-3019

E-Mail "Healthberry" at JMGray2@central.uh.edu
Fax "Healthberry" at (713)743-5164.