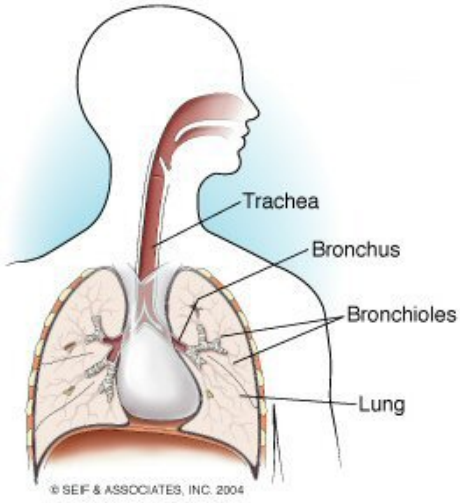
Asthma /Acute Bronchospasm

Your exam shows you have asthma, or acute bronchospasm that acts like asthma. Bronchospasm means your air passages become narrowed. These conditions are due to inflammation and airway spasm that cause narrowing of the bronchial tubes in the lungs. This causes you to have wheezing and shortness of breath.

CAUSES

Respiratory infections and allergies most often bring on these attacks. Smoking, air pollution, cold air, emotional upsets, and vigorous exercise can also bring them on.



TREATMENT

- Treatment is aimed at making the narrowed airways larger. Mild asthma/bronchospasm is usually controlled with inhaled medicines. Albuterol is a common medicine that you breathe in to open spastic or narrowed airways. Some trade names for albuterol are Ventolin or Proventil. Steroid medicine is also used to reduce the inflammation when an attack is moderate or severe. *Antibiotics* (medications used to kill germs) are only used if a bacterial infection is present.
- If you are pregnant and need to use Albuterol (Ventolin or Proventil), you can expect the baby to move more than usual shortly after the medicine is used.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Rest.
- Drink plenty of liquids. This helps the mucus to remain thin and easily coughed up. Do not use caffeine or alcohol.
- Do not smoke. Avoid being exposed to second-hand smoke.
- You play a critical role in keeping yourself in good health. Avoid exposure to things that cause you to wheeze. Avoid exposure to things that cause you to have breathing problems. Keep your medications up-to-date and available. Carefully follow your doctor's treatment plan.
- When pollen or pollution is bad, keep windows closed and use an air conditioner go to places with air conditioning. If you are allergic to furry pets or birds, find new homes for them or keep them outside.
- Take your medicine exactly as prescribed.
- Asthma requires careful medical attention. See your caregiver for follow-up as advised. If you are more than 24 weeks pregnant and you were prescribed any new medications, let your Obstetrician know about the visit and how you are doing. Arrange a recheck.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You are getting worse.
- You have trouble breathing. If severe, call 911.
- You develop chest pain or discomfort.
- You are throwing up or not drinking fluids.
- You are not getting better within 24 hours.
- You are coughing up yellow, green, brown, or bloody sputum.
- You develop a fever over 102º F (38.9º C).
- You have trouble swallowing.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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