

# What Is Asthma?

When you breathe, air goes in and out of your lungs through tubes called airways. Asthma causes changes in your airways that can make it hard to breathe. The exact cause of asthma is not known. It affects people of all ages but most often starts in childhood. Asthma is a long-term disease that can't be cured; but it can be treated.

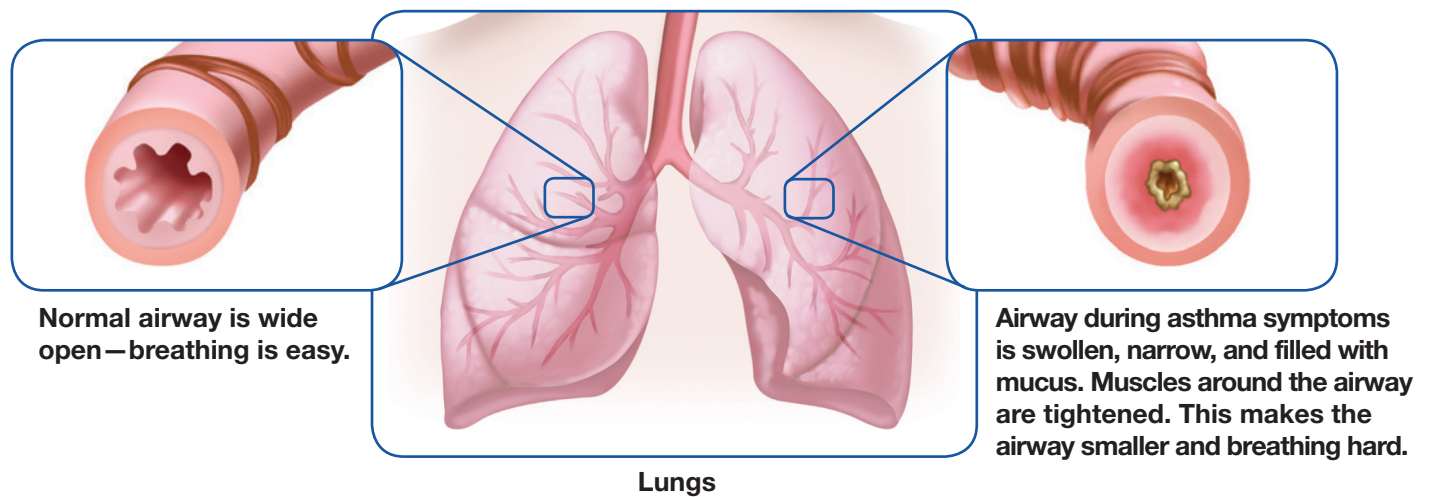
## What does asthma feel like?

Asthma symptoms can vary from person to person. Each person's symptoms can vary from day to day.

The main symptoms of asthma are:

- Coughing— with or without mucus
- Wheezing—a whistling noise when you breathe
- Chest tightness—a feeling that something is squeezing or sitting on your chest
- Shortness of breath—not being able to catch your breath

## What happens when you have asthma symptoms?



## What's it like living with asthma?

- With proper treatment, you can do more of the things you want to do!
- Asthma is in your lungs all the time, even when you have few or no symptoms or feel fine. This is why it is important to take your asthma medicine as directed.
- Remember, you can make a difference in your asthma care.
- List questions you want to ask your healthcare provider about living with asthma:

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**Talk with your healthcare provider about what you can do to manage your asthma and help prevent your asthma symptoms.**



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