

## Preventing common asthma triggers

### Mold, dust mites:

- Clean your kitchen and bathroom regularly to get rid of indoor mold.
- Fix water leaks, which allow mold to grow behind walls and under floors.
- Use a dehumidifier to help dry up the moist air in which molds and dust mites thrive.
- Control dust mites by putting your mattresses and pillows in airtight covers.
- Don't use down-filled pillows, quilts or comforters and remove stuffed animals and clutter from bedrooms.

### Smoking and vaping:

- Avoid breathing in tobacco smoke or vaping emissions if you have asthma, and don't smoke or vape around others with asthma.
- If you insist on smoking or vaping, only do it outdoors, not in homes or cars.

### Pets, cockroaches:

- Cockroaches and their droppings may trigger an asthma attack. Use roach traps to decrease their number.
- With furry pets, either find them a new home or vacuum and mop often.

## For additional information:

New York State Department of Health  
[health.ny.gov/diseases/asthma](http://health.ny.gov/diseases/asthma)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[cdc.gov/asthma](http://cdc.gov/asthma)

Dear Neighbor,

Asthma is a serious health risk for many people in our community. While the condition can be life-threatening, there are ways to prevent many asthma attacks.

Asthma is also a leading cause of school absenteeism among children. New York State law makes it easier for students to cope with this disease by enabling children to carry an inhaler to school for self-administering inhaler-rescue medications. In an emergency, this can save lives.

This brochure includes general information on asthma and tips for those living with this disease and their families. If I can be of additional help in this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,



**Carl E. Heastie**  
Speaker of the Assembly

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# Asthma:

## A serious health risk.



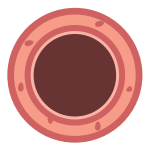
Courtesy of  
**Speaker of the Assembly**  
**Carl E. Heastie**

# Taking control of asthma

One in 10 New Yorkers has asthma, and nearly half don't have their asthma under control.<sup>1</sup> Uncontrolled asthma causes repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and nighttime or early morning coughing. While no single medication or behavior will make asthma go away, there are ways to control this disease. Taking control isn't just about treating attacks — it means preventing them. Controlling your asthma can reduce your symptoms, improve your sleep and help you avoid missing school or work. Know the warning signs of an attack, avoid the triggers that can cause an attack and follow the advice of your health care provider.

## About asthma

- Asthma is a lung disease that can be life-threatening. It causes breathing problems, called attacks or episodes.
- During an asthma attack, the walls of the paths that carry air to your lungs (airways) swell and there is less space for air to get in and out of your lungs. Mucus that your body makes also clogs up the airways.
- You can get asthma at any age, but it commonly begins in childhood.
- If a family member has asthma, you are more likely to have it.



AIRWAY

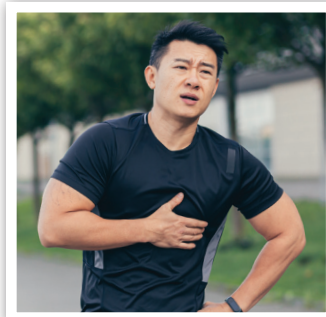


ASTHMATIC AIRWAY  
DURING ATTACK

## Kids and asthma

- Asthma is the one of the most common chronic illness among school-age children.
- Kids should be encouraged to talk about their asthma.
- Parents should educate themselves about preventive management and, in particular, preventive medications.
- It's important to help your child monitor their medication regimen.
- New York State law allows children with written authorization from a health care provider and parental consent to carry an inhaler to school for self-administering inhaler-rescue medications.

## Exercise and asthma



Exercise is a common asthma trigger, but with proper treatment and management people with exercise-induced asthma can participate safely. Proper management

requires you to take steps to prevent symptoms and carefully monitor your respiratory status before, during and after exercise.

### If you have asthma:

- Take your asthma seriously.
- See your doctor and get a written treatment plan to take the guesswork out of managing asthma.
- Follow your doctor's instructions carefully, including taking any prescribed medication.
- If asthma symptoms don't improve, see your doctor again and discuss other options.



## What starts an asthma attack?

An asthma attack is triggered by something that disturbs your lungs. Asthma triggers can vary from person to person. Knowing and managing triggers is a key part of asthma management. Once a person knows their triggers, it is possible to develop a plan to avoid them. These triggers can include:

- perfume
- dust mites
- animal dander
- feathers
- air pollution
- pollen
- smoke
- roaches
- mold
- paint fumes
- exercise
- cold air



This brochure offers a general overview of information to help you better understand the topic. There may be new or changed legislation since this brochure's publication date. It is not a substitute for the text of the law or legal advice. Sources: NYS Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<sup>1</sup> [health.ny.gov/diseases/asthma/asthma\\_faqs.htm](http://health.ny.gov/diseases/asthma/asthma_faqs.htm)