



Myths and Facts of Asthma

Myth: You only have asthma when you have trouble breathing.

Fact: Asthma is a disease that can be very serious and hard to predict. Even without visible symptoms, there is underlying inflammation in the airways in people with asthma. Asthma does not go away when the symptoms are gone. It is important to keep your asthma in control by taking your daily controller medicines and avoiding asthma triggers.

Myth: Asthma is all in your mind.

Fact: Asthma is real. It takes place in the airways and lungs, not in the mind. Emotions, such as stress, crying, yelling or laughing hard, can act as asthma triggers causing already existing asthma to flare up or become worse.

Myth: Asthma symptoms are the same for everyone.

Fact: Asthma can affect each person differently. One person may show several symptoms, such as wheezing, chest tightness, and fatigue, while someone else may only cough. You should know what your child's symptoms are so you can get help quickly.

Myth: Children often outgrow their asthma.

Fact: Asthma is a life-long disease. A child's asthma can seem to go away or become less serious over time. When children's lungs grow, the airways expand. This sometimes causes asthma symptoms to decrease, but symptoms can return without warning.

Myth: Steroids used in asthma are dangerous.

Fact: The National Institutes of Health (NIH) suggests inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) as the preferred treatment for persistent asthma. When used at recommended doses for most patients, the benefits of ICS outweigh the risks. These steroids are NOT the same as the anabolic steroids some athletes use to build muscle.

Myth: Steroids used in asthma will stunt growth.

Fact: Inhaled corticosteroids do not stop children from reaching their full height. Studies have shown that children using inhaled corticosteroids will reach normal adult height, although it may cause some delays in their growth early on. It is possible that a child who suffers from asthma symptoms regularly may experience stunted growth. This is due to the fact that a sick child will not grow at the same rate as a well child. It is important to work with your child's doctor and asthma action plan to treat your child's asthma in the best way.

Myth: If your child has asthma, he or she should not play sports or be active.

Facts: Sports and other forms of activity are just as important for someone with asthma as they are for someone without asthma. It is important to control a child's asthma and make sure they follow the guidelines set by their doctor to take controller medications, as well as taking medications before being active. They should also have a current asthma action plan from their doctor to help prevent asthma attacks.