

BATTLING THE SCOURGE OF ASTHMA

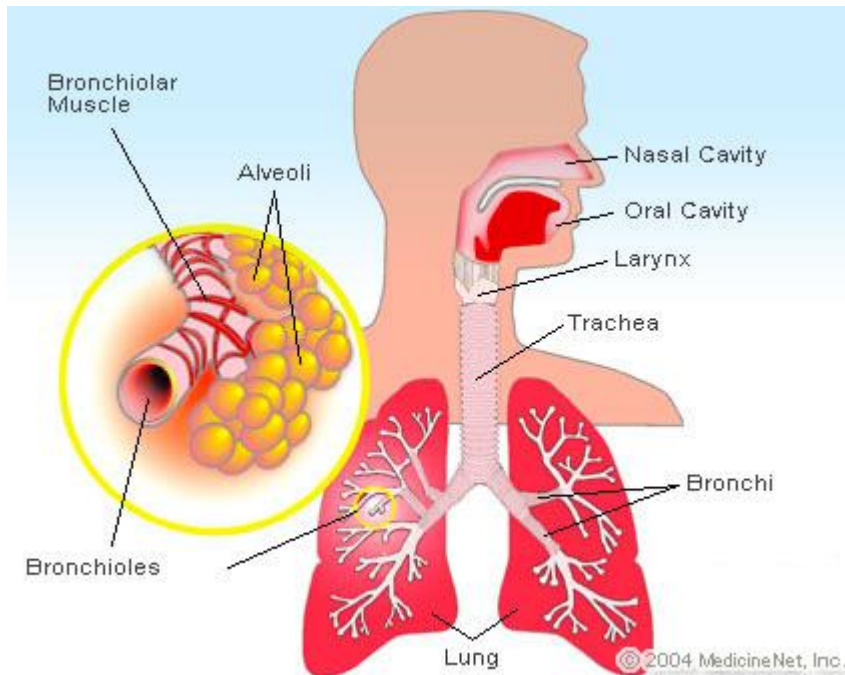


From the Perspective of a Herbal Medicine Practitioner.

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Asthma: Facts WHO

- According to World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, 300 million people suffer from asthma and 255 000 people died of asthma in 2005
- Asthma is the most common chronic disease among children
- Asthma is not just a public health problem for high income countries: it occurs in all countries regardless of level of development. Over 80% of asthma deaths occurs in low- and lower-middle income countries
- Asthma is under-diagnosed and under-treated, creating a substantial burden to individuals and families and possibly restricting individuals' activities for a lifetime



Asthma Overview

Asthma is a disease that affects the breathing passages of the lungs (bronchioles). Asthma is caused by chronic (ongoing, long-term) inflammation of these passages. This makes the breathing passages, or airways, of the person with asthma highly sensitive to various "triggers."

- When the inflammation is "triggered" by any number of external and internal factors, the passages swell and fill with mucus.
- Muscles within the breathing passages contract (bronchospasm), causing even further narrowing of the airways.
- This narrowing makes it difficult for air to be breathed out (exhaled) from the lungs.
- This resistance to exhaling leads to the typical symptoms of an asthma attack.
- Because asthma causes resistance, or obstruction, to exhaled air, it is called an obstructive lung disease. The medical term for such lung conditions is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or COPD. COPD is actually a group of diseases that includes not only asthma but also chronic bronchitis and emphysema.
- Like any other chronic disease, asthma is a condition you live with every day of your life. You can have an attack any time you are exposed to one of your triggers. Unlike other chronic obstructive lung diseases, asthma is reversible.
- Asthma cannot be cured with orthodox drugs, but it can be controlled. Natural medicine can cure it.
- You have a better chance of controlling your asthma if it is diagnosed early and treatment is begun right away.
- With proper treatment, people with asthma can have fewer and less severe attacks.
- Without treatment, they will have more frequent and more severe asthma attacks and can even die.
- Asthma is on the rise in Nigeria, the United States and other developed countries. We are not sure exactly why this is, but these factors may contribute.
- We grow up as children with less exposure to infection than did our ancestors, which has made our immune systems more sensitive.
- We spend more and more time indoors, where we are exposed to indoor allergens such as dust and mold.
- The air we breathe is more polluted than the air most of our ancestors breathed.
- Our lifestyle has led to our getting less exercise and an epidemic of obesity. There is some evidence to suggest an association between obesity and asthma.
- Asthma is a very common disease in Nigeria where more than 5 million people are affected and also in the United States, where more than 17 million people are affected. A third of these are children. Asthma affects all races and is slightly more common in African Americans than in other races.
- Asthma affects all ages, although it is more common in younger people. The frequency and severity of asthma attacks tend to decrease as a person ages.
- Asthma is the most common chronic disease of children
- Asthma has many costs to society as well as to the individual affected.
- Many people are forced to make compromises in their lifestyle to accommodate their disease.
- Asthma is a major cause of work and school absence and lost productivity.
- Asthma is one of the most common reasons for emergency department visits and hospitalization.
- Asthma costs the U.S. economy nearly \$13 billion each year.

Asthma Causes

The exact cause of asthma is not known.

- What all people with asthma have in common is chronic airway inflammation and excessive airway sensitivity to various triggers.
- Research has focused on why some people develop asthma while others do not.
- Some people are born with the tendency to have asthma, while others are not. Scientists are trying to find the genes that cause this tendency.
- The environment you live in and the way you live partly determine whether you have asthma attacks. An asthma attack is a reaction to a trigger. It is similar in many ways to an allergic reaction.
- An allergic reaction is a response by the body's immune system to an "invader."
- When the cells of the immune system sense an invader, they set off a series of reactions that help fight off the invader.

- It is this series of reactions that causes the production of mucus and bronchospasms. These responses cause the symptoms of an asthma attack.
- In asthma, the "invaders" are the triggers listed below. Triggers vary among individuals.
- Because asthma is a type of allergic reaction, it is sometimes called reactive airway disease.

Each person with asthma has his or her own unique set of triggers. Most triggers cause attacks in some people with asthma and not in others. Common triggers of asthma attacks are the following:

- exposure to tobacco or wood smoke,
- breathing polluted air,
- inhaling other respiratory irritants such as perfumes or cleaning products,
- exposure to airway irritants at the workplace,
- breathing in allergy-causing substances (allergens) such as molds, dust, or animal dander,
- an upper respiratory infection, such as a cold, flu, sinusitis, or bronchitis,
- exposure to cold, dry weather,
- emotional excitement or stress,
- physical exertion or exercise,
- reflux of stomach acid known as gastroesophageal reflux disease, or GERD,
- sulfites, an additive to some foods and wine, and
- menstruation: In some, not all, women, asthma symptoms are closely tied to the menstrual cycle.

Risk factors for developing asthma:

- hay fever (allergic rhinitis) and other allergies -- this is the single biggest risk factor;
- eczema: another type of allergy affecting the skin; and
- genetic predisposition: a parent, brother, or sister also has asthma.

Asthma Symptoms

When the breathing passages become irritated or infected, an attack is triggered. The attack may come on suddenly or develop slowly over several days or hours. The main symptoms that signal an attack are as follows:

- wheezing,
- breathlessness,
- chest tightness,
- coughing, and
- difficulty speaking.

Symptoms may occur during the day or at night. If they happen at night, they may disturb your sleep. Wheezing is the most common symptom of an asthma attack.

- Wheezing is a musical, whistling, or hissing sound with breathing.
- Wheezes are most often heard during exhalation, but they can occur during breathing in (inhaling).
- Not all asthmatics wheeze, and not all people who wheeze are asthmatics.

Current guidelines for the care of people with asthma include classifying the severity of asthma symptoms, as follows:

- **Mild intermittent:** This includes attacks no more than twice a week and nighttime attacks no more than twice a month. Attacks last no more than a few hours to days. Severity of attacks varies, but there are no symptoms between attacks.
- **Mild persistent:** This includes attacks more than twice a week, but not every day, and nighttime symptoms more than twice a month. Attacks are sometimes severe enough to interrupt regular activities.
- **Moderate persistent:** This includes daily attacks and nighttime symptoms more than once a week. More severe attacks occur at least twice a week and may last for days. Attacks require daily use of quick-relief (rescue) medication and changes in daily activities.

- Severe persistent: This includes frequent severe attacks, continual daytime symptoms, and frequent nighttime symptoms. Symptoms require limits on daily activities. Just because a person has mild or moderate asthma does not mean that he or she cannot have a severe attack. The severity of asthma can change over time, either for better or for worse.

When to Seek Medical Care

If you think you or your child may have asthma, make an appointment with your health-care provider. Some clues pointing to asthma include the following:

- wheezing,
- difficulty breathing,
- pain or tightness in your chest, and
- recurrent, spasmodic cough that is worse at night.

If you or your child has asthma, you should have an action plan worked out in advance with your health-care provider. This plan should include instructions on what to do when an asthma attack occurs, when to call the health-care provider, and when to go to a hospital emergency department. The following are general guidelines only. If your provider recommends another plan for you, follow that plan.

How We Treat Asthma with ASTHMACARE



A few weeks ago, a young mother of a 4-year old child came with the child to complain that for about 4 weeks, she had not slept for more than 6 hours both day and night and she looked tired and wearied. Her daughter had been diagnosed with Asthma and she had tried out all medical options without success. The child had to be withdrawn from the Nursery school and at that young age, the child is an expert in the application of inhaler in order to avoid a disaster that could result from the frequent attack. This young woman was given the impression that this problem had no permanent solution and an elderly pastor who was familiar with our products strongly suggested that she should visit us before losing hope completely.

We are herbal practitioners and we do not prescribe our products unless we are sure that a disease like Asthma has been properly diagnosed by a competent medical practitioner. We combine two of our products to treat diagnosed cases of Asthma. The first is our well known Jobelyn which we are sure would address inflammation and improve the immune system. As a very powerful antioxidant, it would also take care of the free radicals which are normally implicated in almost all diseases including Asthma. The other product we combine with Jobelyn is Asthmacare. It is our proprietary blend which we have used for over 10 years to alleviate the suffering of Asthma patients. The major components of this product are: (1) ISU ESUMEREN (OGEDE ODO) - BOTANICAL NAME: *Crinum jagus*; COMMON NAME (*Crinum lily*); (2) ALUBOSA ONISU FUFUN - BOTANICAL NAME: *Allium ascalonicum*.

Asthmacare, a herbal anti-asthma, provides long-lasting relief for asthma no matter the severity of the attack. It proves exceptionally useful as a broncho-dilator. It stimulates the sympathetic nervous system, relieving the bronchial spasm that underlies the asthmatic state.

Allergic reactions respond well to Asthmacare because of its action on the sympathetic nerves.

Asthmacare has marked anti-spasmodic and broncho-dilatory effects and it supplies the following actions : Alterative Pulmonary Expectorant, Demulcent, Anti-spasmodic, Anti-microbial, Anti-inflammatory, Anti-catarrhals, Cardio-Tonic and Nervine.

To demonstrate the efficacy of the treatment, we decided to apply the two products and placed the patient under observation for an hour. After 30 minutes of waiting, the young mother rushed back to my office with the child who had improved considerably and was playing around our office. This woman was excited and wanted to know how long the treatment would last for a permanent relief to be obtained. She confessed that her husband had abandoned her and the child for more than 3 months because of the trauma of sleeplessness and the amount of money he was spending to tackle the problem. We explained that the initial treatment could last for about 4 weeks of regular use of our medication and thereafter prophylactic use for a further 4 weeks. There could be a mild sign for a few months thereafter and within a period of about 6 months, most of our patients would have been free from this dangerous disease. This is not a guarantee but a reasonable assurance based on patients treated in the last 10 years.

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