



# Practice

# Asthma

- Condition in which airways narrow and swell, produce extra mucus and breathing becomes difficult
- Inflammation underlying asthma is continuous; breathing problems usually happen in "episodes" or "attacks"
- Can be life-threatening if not properly managed.
- Can not be cured, but symptoms can be controlled

# Symptoms

- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness or pain
- Trouble sleeping caused by shortness of breath, coughing or wheezing
- An audible whistling or wheezing sound when exhaling (wheezing is a common sign of asthma in children)
- Bouts of coughing or wheezing that are worsened by a respiratory virus such as a cold or the flu

# Common triggers

- Medical Conditions – e.g respiratory infections, acid reflux
- Food & Medicines – e.g. common food allergies, aspirin, NSAIDs
- Weather, Pollen, & Air Pollution - cold, damp, windy, stormy weather, sudden temperature changes, weeds, trees, grass, air pollution, smog, and fumes
- Mold

# Common triggers

- Animals – birds, animals with fur
- Smoke - Cigarette, cigar or pipe smoke, fireplace or wood smoke, exhaust
- Pests – e.g dust mites, cockroaches
- Exercise
- Stress
- Strong Odors – e.g cleaning supplies, gas stoves, scented candles, hairspray

# Management

- Understand and manage triggers
- Monitor symptoms
- Adherence to prescribed medications
  - Long-term control medicines (also called controller, maintenance, or anti-inflammatory medicines)
  - Quick-relief medicines (also called rescue medicines)