Practical Tips for Avoiding Common Asthma Triggers

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Asthma Management Plan

Periodic asthma attacks strike just about everyone with this common respiratory condition from time to time. However, there's an asthma management plan you can use to minimize your risk and reduce the severity of symptoms when an attack does strike.

The key is to work out a written asthma management plan with your doctor and carefully follow the outlined suggestions. Then, communicate with your doctor and make any necessary adjustments if you suffer frequent or severe asthma attacks even though you’re sticking to your treatment plan.

Common Approaches to Asthma Management

Doctors will typically recommend the following approaches to avoid asthma attacks:

- Take preventative medications daily. Many asthma patients are prescribed oral medications which help reduce asthma attacks when taken daily. Be sure to take these medicines as directed by your doctor and pharmacist.
- Monitor your lung function and avoid respiratory system irritants. Peak flow meters can help you keep tabs on your lung function; if it seems to be suffering, you may be exposing yourself to environmental asthma triggers which could lead to an attack. Systematically assess your exposure to irritants such as dust, pet dander, allergens, smoke, mold and moisture, low outdoor air quality, and humidity. Take immediate action to reduce your exposure to known irritants.
- Take your inhaled medicines as prescribed in the event of an attack. Always keep your inhaler with you and use it if you suffer an asthma attack. Being prepared in the event of an emergency is a vital part of any asthma management strategy.

Beyond these important approaches to asthma management, you can also make simple changes in everyday life that will help you avoid attacks:

- Keep your bed sheets clean and use hypoallergenic covers on mattresses and pillows.
- Keep pets out of bedrooms, and do not allow pets on furniture; if you or your child has severe asthma, it may be better to maintain a pet-free home altogether.
- Choose hardwood flooring over carpeting, particularly in bedrooms, to prevent dander and allergens from getting trapped in the rug fibers.
- Avoid the buildup of toxic mold in your home by optimizing indoor humidity levels.
- Limit or avoid exposure to firsthand and secondhand cigarette smoke.
- Do not use cleaning products or cleansers with caustic or harsh chemicals.
- Be careful during hot and humid weather, and on days when your local air quality index is low.
- Wear a breathing mask when exercising outdoors during cold weather.
- Be proactive about controlling your seasonal allergies.

Remember that you may suffer the occasional asthma attack from time to time, even if you are very careful about prevention. While this is perfectly normal, be sure to report to your doctor if it starts happening more frequently than normal, or if attacks are unusually severe or require hospitalization.