Learning How to Keep Your Asthma Symptoms in Check

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Breathe Easy

If you are an asthma sufferer, any type of flare-up is discouraging. You seek to gain control over this condition as it keeps you from doing the things you want to do, such as playing with your children outside. There are some interventions for reining in asthma so that you can enjoy more time with your family and friends. This article will explore ways to controlling asthma.

Keep a Diary

Tracking your symptoms so that you recognize where you need to make some adjustments to your treatment will be very valuable in controlling your asthmatic episodes. Any of the following symptoms should be noted:

- Shortness of breath.
- Wheezing.
- Chest pain or tightness.
- Sleep disruption from coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath.
- Symptoms that arise with exercise.
- Anytime asthma makes it difficult to do daily activities.
- Document quick-relief inhaler use and how many puffs were taken.
- Any changes to the color of phlegm.
- Hay fever symptoms (sneezing, runny nose).
- Anything else that triggers your asthma flare-ups.

Always maintain the habit of keeping this diary as symptoms and severity of asthma change all the time.

Document Lung Functionality

Keep records of your breathing tests or lung function tests. If you find that your lungs are not working the best, your asthma may not be under control either. The two lung function tests to note are the peak flow test and spirometry. Peak flow can be tested at home with a hand-held device called the peak flow meter. The measurement indicates how fast you can force air out of your lungs. Spirometry is done at the doctor's office or you can take a hand-held one to do at home as well. This test will measure how much air you can hold in your lungs and how much you can blow out in one second after taking a deep breath. By knowing how well your lungs are functioning will let the doctor know what interventions to take to bring your asthma under control.

Adjust Treatment as Needed

There may be a need to adjust your medication if your lungs are not functioning as they should. You should, with your doctor, make up an asthma action plan to know when you need to adjust and how to do so. For example, if you find you are using your quick-acting inhaler quite frequently, you may need an adjustment in your long-acting

medication. Make sure you know your asthma medications and use them properly. They will work for you only if you use them correctly. Meet with your doctor regularly to review your treatment plan. Your asthma diary will be a vital tool for your doctor in determining the best course of action for your condition. By following the plan set by your doctor, it will help you avoid asthma attacks and minimize asthma symptoms.

Remember that if you are still plagued by asthma issues after following your plan, talk to your doctor about adjusting your medications. Things to consider, too, are things like seasonal triggers that cause asthma to worsen at certain times of the year so your medication will be adjusted accordingly. You may also be able to cut back on medication if your asthma becomes well-controlled.

By watching what triggers your asthma attacks, you will be equipped to deal with this condition head-on and manage it much better.