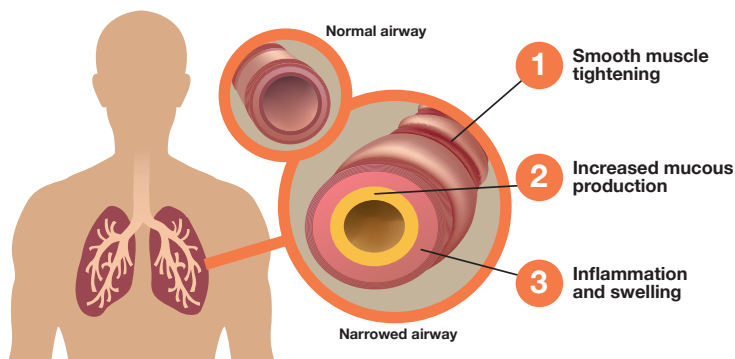


WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN ASTHMA ATTACK?

There are 3 main processes that contribute to narrowing of the airways and make breathing more difficult during an asthma attack:¹



Recognising an asthma attack



Look out for any of the following signs:²

- Worsening of cough, breathlessness, wheeze or tight chest
- Breathlessness causing difficulty in speaking, eating or sleeping
- An increase in breathing rate, leading to difficulty in catching breath
- Reliever medication does not give the same relief of breathlessness as before

What to do during an asthma attack^{2,3}



Keep calm



Sit up straight, do not lie down



Take one puff of your reliever inhaler and hold your breath for 10 seconds, then breathe out slowly



Don't be afraid to seek help, even at night



Call for emergency assistance if symptoms worsen or do not improve after use of reliever inhaler

Managing risk and preventing asthma attacks

Proper management of asthma can effectively prevent asthma attacks in most people



Take your preventer inhaler every day as prescribed by your doctor, even when you feel well with your asthma⁵



If in doubt, seek advice from your doctor, pharmacist or nurse⁵



Follow a written asthma action plan²



Know your triggers, e.g pollen or cigarette smoke, and minimise exposure where possible⁵

References

1. <https://www.verywell.com/what-happens-in-the-lungs-during-an-asthma-attack-200911> [Accessed 4 August 2016]
2. <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/asthma-attacks/> [Accessed 4 August 2016]
3. http://us.gsk.com/products/assets/us_ventolin_hfa.pdf [Accessed 16 September 2016]

4. <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/manage-your-asthma/> [Accessed 4 August 2016]
5. Global Initiative for Asthma. Pocket Guide for Physicians and Nurses. Updated 2015. Available from: http://ginasthma.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/GINA_Pocket_2015.pdf [Accessed 4 August 2016]

Talk to your healthcare professional for more information.