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April 2019

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PROTEIN SNACK IDEAS • SPRING CLEANSE • SEASONAL BRUNCH RECIPES

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR ASTHMA

HELPFUL HERBS AND SUPPLEMENTS

One in every 15 Americans has asthma, and the prevalence has been growing over the last few decades. Every year, asthma kills over 4,000 Americans and causes more than 500,000 hospitalizations.

Asthma has a genetic component. If one parent has asthma, chances are 1 in 3 that each child will have asthma. If both parents have asthma, chances are 7 in 10 that the children will have asthma.

Asthma, which reflects spasm and inflammation of the pipes carrying air in and out of your lungs, is becoming more common. This is no surprise given the increase in allergens (including homes and offices with mold), nutritional deficiencies, and chemicals in our environment.

Symptoms of Asthma

Asthma attacks can vary from mild to life-threatening. Symptoms include shortness of breath, cough, wheezing, and/or chest tightness.

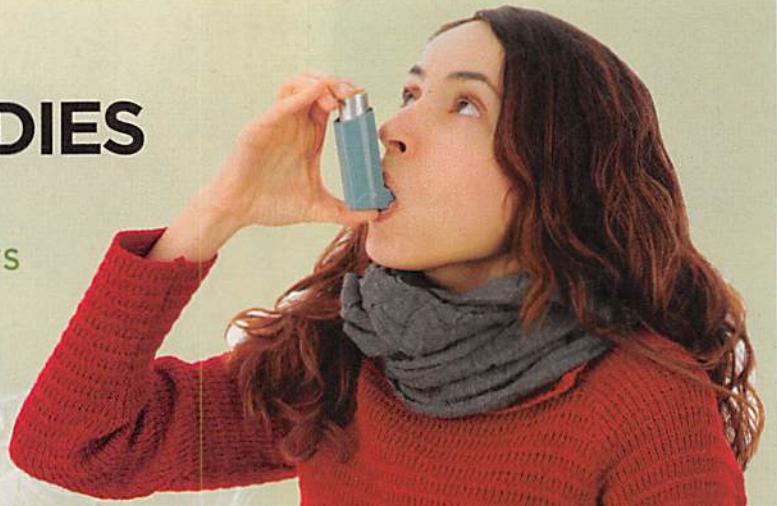
Many factors can trigger an asthma attack, including allergens, infections, exercise, abrupt weather changes, and exposure to irritants such as tobacco smoke.

There are many helpful asthma medications, and most of these are being reasonably prescribed by doctors. Natural therapies that eliminate allergic sensitivity and decrease inflammation should also be used. When combined with simple efforts to decrease contact with allergens, these natural therapies help you feel much better while decreasing the need for medications.

Improving Healthy Air Flow & Breathing

Magnesium, vitamins B6 and B12, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, selenium, molybdenum, beta carotene, and bioflavonoids have been shown to improve air flow significantly. You can find these in combination in a good multivitamin/mineral.

Consider taking 300 milligrams (mg) of the herb boswellia three times a day. This anti-inflammatory herbal—also called frankincense—significantly reduces asthma after six weeks, and usually within days. Boswellia combined with curcumin may add more benefit. Boswellia is especially helpful in lowering the dose of prednisone needed in many conditions (especially if BCM 95 curcumin is added).



Try 30 to 45 mg of lycopene a day for exercise-induced asthma. Though found in tomatoes, it takes about a pound of tomatoes, 11 ounces of tomato juice, or 7 ounces of tomato paste to supply 30 mg of lycopene.

Fish oil is helpful for children with asthma—especially after the environmental triggers are removed. Tuna and salmon are good sources. Children who eat fish more than once a week have one-third the asthma risk of those eating minimal fish. Children whose mothers took fish oil during the last three months of their pregnancy had a 63 percent lower risk of asthma than those whose mothers took placebo!

Other Therapies & Advice

Begin by cleaning your home. Buy a HEPA filter for your bedroom. Also, consider plastic casings around mattresses and even pillows to keep down dust, and ask your allergist to treat you for dust mites if you test positive for this allergy.

Avoid food colorings and additives. Common asthma triggers include tartrazine yellow dye #5, benzoates, and sulfites.

Some foods also act as triggers. Try a food elimination diet for seven to ten days to see if the asthma symptoms improve when you are off certain foods. It may be very enlightening! 



Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, is a board-certified internist and author of the popular free iPhone application "Cures A-Z," which was ranked in the top 10 of all health/wellness downloads on iTunes. Dr. Teitelbaum is the author of the perennial bestseller *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* (Avery Penguin), which has sold over half a million copies.