



Myths of asthma

Changing asthma myths into asthma facts

Myth You only have asthma when you have trouble breathing.

Fact Asthma is a serious, unpredictable disease. People with asthma have it all the time. Asthma does NOT go away when your symptoms go away. You need to care for your asthma every day to keep it controlled.

Myth Asthma is all in your head.

Fact Asthma affects the airways of your lungs. Two main things happen:

- **Inflammation** – the airways become swollen and fill with mucus
- **Constriction** – the muscles around the airways tighten, making the airways narrower

These things make it hard for you to breathe. Adults and children take asthma medicines every day to help control asthma symptoms and prevent flare-ups.

Myth Asthma medicines should only be taken when you have symptoms.

Fact People with persistent asthma should use controller medicine every day, even if they feel fine, to help decrease inflammation and swelling of the airways and prevent symptoms. Your quick-relief (rescue) inhaler should be used at the FIRST sign of symptoms to help keep your asthma under control.

Myth Children outgrow asthma.

Fact Asthma is a chronic lung disease that never goes away. Asthma may get less severe as a child gets older, but it doesn't go away. Symptoms can return at any time without warning.

Myth You don't need to take medicine every day if you have mild asthma.

Fact There is no way to tell when mild symptoms will become life-threatening. Taking your controller medicine every day helps to control symptoms and protect the lungs from damage.

Myth Steroids are bad for you.

Fact The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommends inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) as the preferred treatment for persistent asthma. The NIH has determined that, when used at recommended doses in most patients, the benefits of ICS outweigh the risks. These steroids are NOT the same as the anabolic steroids some athletes use to build muscle. Anabolic steroids may be unsafe when used to build muscle.

Talk to your doctor about the best treatment plan for you.