

# Asthma



## Risk Factors:

- **Genetics**  
If a parent has asthma, there is a 1 in 3 chance of resulting children also having the disease.
- **Age**  
60% of all asthma deaths are people over the age of 65.
- **Gender**  
Women are more at risk than men.
- **Low birth weight**
- **Living in polluted areas**  
Regular exposure to toxins in the air has long-term effects on lung development in children.
- **Obesity**  
Overweight children are 1.5 times more likely to develop asthma than children who are at a healthy weight.

## Triggers:

- Tobacco smoke
- Dust Mites
- Pets
- Cockroaches and other pests
- Mold
- Outdoor air pollution

## Prevention:

- Quit smoking or remove yourself from secondhand smoke
- Get supervised exercise
- Clean your house and bedding every week
- Keep pets outside
- Store food in airtight containers for pest control
- Dry damp or wet things completely

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the respiratory system where the airways of the lungs tighten and swell up when they come in contact with **triggers**. It is the most common long-term disease in children but can also occur in adults.

## Facts

- About 26 million Americans, or one of every 12, suffer from asthma.
- Asthma is responsible for 2 million emergency department visits each year in the United States.
- 7 million children in the United States had asthma in 2010.
- Nearly 13 million Americans reported at least one asthma attack in the previous year.
- The average hospital visit for asthma problems is 4.3 days.
- More than 10.5 million school days are missed each year in the U.S. because of asthma.



For more information and data, go to [www.SDHealthStatistics.com](http://www.SDHealthStatistics.com)

Community Health Statistics Unit:  
619-285-6479

## Warning signs for parents

- Coughing at night
- Cold or the flu
- Fever
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Tickle in the throat
- Sneezing and watery eyes
- Chest tightness
- Weak or tired
- Headaches
- Restlessness
- Pale face
- Dark circles under the eyes

*If your child has these symptoms, discuss them with your child's doctor.*

## Resources

Information on asthma prevention plans provided by the EPA

[www.noattacks.org](http://www.noattacks.org)  
1-800-NO-ATTACKS

San Diego Regional Asthma Coalition

[www.asthmasandiego.org](http://www.asthmasandiego.org)

Check the AQI in Your Area

[www.epa.gov/asthma](http://www.epa.gov/asthma)