

What is Asthma?

In West Virginia, it's estimated that 131,000 adults and 38,000 children suffer from asthma.

Asthma is a chronic lung disease that affects your breathing. The disease causes the airways to the lungs to become inflamed and very sensitive. The airways narrow in response to irritants, making it difficult for the sufferer to breathe.

Asthma symptoms include coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and chest tightness. Asthma sufferers can experience attacks ranging from mild to severe and life threatening.

West Virginia
**TOBACCO
QUITLINE**
1-877-966-8784

Division of
Tobacco Prevention
WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

 West Virginia
Asthma
Education and Prevention Program
West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

WEST VIRGINIA TOBACCO
CESSATION
PROGRAM
West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

WEST VIRGINIA
Department of
**Health &
Human
Resources**

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources
Bureau for Public Health
Office of Epidemiology and Health Promotion
Division of Tobacco Prevention Cessation Program

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Phone: (304) 558-2939
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www.wvquitline.com

Know the Risks

TOBACCO USE &

Asthma



West Virginia Department of
Health and Human Resources

Asthma Prevention

Asthma cannot be cured, but if you have asthma, you can control how frequently you experience its symptoms and discomfort.



Asthma Triggers:

- *Pets* — Any pets with fur or feathers can trigger an asthma attack. If your pet causes a family member to experience asthma symptoms, remove the pet from your home or keep them cleaned regularly and out of the sufferer's bedroom.
- *Tobacco smoke* — If you or a family member suffers from asthma, cigarette smoke should not be permitted inside your home. Ask family members to smoke outside. If you use tobacco and suffer from asthma, you should quit.
- *Mold* — Molds can form in kitchens, bathrooms and basements. Clean these areas often and make sure these areas have good air circulation. Dehumidifiers can help a basement's humidity.
- *Strong odors* — Perfumes, paint fumes and household cleaners are examples of strong odors that can trigger an asthma attack.

- *Dust mites* — Dust mites are microscopic spiders found in dust. They can be a major trigger of an asthma attack. Clean regularly, especially in bedrooms.

Asthma and Secondhand Smoke: *The Facts*

Cigarette smoke is not passive. It contains approximately 4,000 chemicals — including cancer-causing agents, irritants and toxins.

- Secondhand smoke can cause asthma in children who have never before experienced any symptoms.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke is an irritant to the airways, which can trigger an asthma attack and make the disease's symptoms more severe.
- Tobacco smoke causes airway inflammation and affects the immune system, making it difficult for lung tissue to repair itself.
- Children suffering from asthma and living with a smoker are more likely to experience severe asthma attacks, take more medicine for their asthma, and miss school more often.

If you quit smoking, your health will greatly improve. It can also help you prevent cardiovascular disease.

Smoking becomes an addiction, so it can be hard to quit. However, studies prove you're more likely to successfully quit tobacco if you are being coached. The West Virginia Tobacco Quitline provides:

- **A FREE or low cost program with personal advice**
- **FREE educational materials**
- **Four FREE calls with a phone coach**

Don't risk developing asthma, creating an asthma attack, heart disease, a stroke, high blood pressure or any other health problems. **Quit tobacco today.**

For more information, visit
www.wvasthma.org



**Call the
West Virginia Tobacco
Quitline today.**