



Asthma Myths

Myth: It's better to 'tough it out' without taking asthma medication.

The lungs do not get stronger or become better able to deal with asthma if a person tries to work through an attack without medication. In fact, the lung inflammation that goes along with an attack can cause permanent damage to the lungs. Always use medication according to the Asthma Action Plan. If you have questions, talk with your health care provider.

Myth: Steroids used in asthma are dangerous.

The corticosteroids used to control asthma are not the same as the often illegal steroids used by some athletes, and have no effect on muscles or athletic performance. They are related to the steroids found in creams to reduce itch or inflammation of the skin. Many scientific studies have shown asthma medications to be safe over long periods of use.

Myth: Sports and physical activity make asthma worse.

Physical activity, and the conditioning that comes with it, should be part of everyone's life, including those with asthma. Asthma should not interfere with physical activity; however, you may need medication in order to participate fully. Always check with your health care provider first.

Myth: Everybody's asthma is the same.

Asthma severity can vary greatly from one person to another. Treatment for one person may not be the same as another. Talk with your health care provider or refer to your Asthma Action Plan, and never share asthma medications with someone else.

Myth: Asthma is an emotional illness.

Asthma is caused by inflammation and constriction in the lungs. It is stressful to have an asthma attack, but emotions do not cause asthma.