

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory lung disease that causes repeated breathing difficulties.

The characteristics of asthma are three airway problems:

1. Obstruction

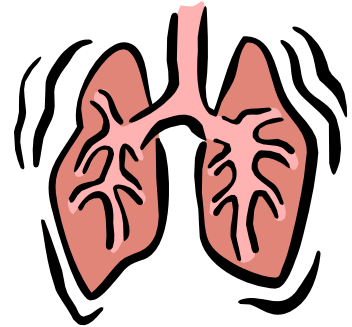
The muscles of the airways tighten, so it's difficult for air to pass through.

2. Inflammation

The inner lining of the airways swells, so there's less room for air to pass through.

3. Hyper-responsiveness

The airways narrow quickly after exposure to a trigger.



Asthma Statistics

Approximately *20.3 million people* in the U.S. have been diagnosed with asthma. At least 6 million of these people are children under the age of 18.



Asthma is *the leading, serious and chronic illness* among children in the U.S.

Asthma accounts for *14 million absences* from school each year.

Asthma is the *third ranking cause of hospitalizations* for children under 15.