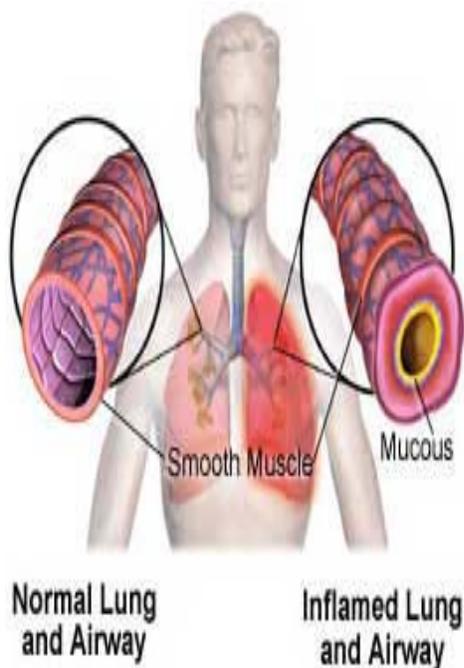




Asthma

A significant trigger for asthma attacks is the unhealthy behavior of cigarette smoking. Additionally, the exposure to second hand smoke is also a significant trigger for asthma. Other triggers for asthma can be respiratory infections and colds, allergic reactions to such allergens as pollen, mold, animal dander, feather, dust, food, and cockroaches, indoor and outdoor air pollutants, including ozone and particle pollution, exposure to cold air or sudden temperature change, exercise, and stress. Asthma is a reversible obstructive lung disease, caused by increased reaction of the airways to various stimuli. It is a chronic inflammatory condition with acute asthma attacks. Asthma can be a life-threatening disease if not properly managed. In 2009, it was estimated that 24.6 million Americans currently have asthma. Of these, 12.8 million Americans (4.1 million children under 18) had an asthma attack. Asthma breathing problems usually happen in "episodes" or "attacks," but the inflammation underlying asthma is continuous. An asthma episode is a series of events that result in narrowed airways. These include: swelling of the lining, tightening of the muscle, and increased secretion of mucus in the airway. The narrowed airway is responsible for the difficulty in breathing with the familiar "wheeze."





Practicing healthy behaviors can decrease your chances of having an asthma attack

1. Stop smoking
2. Avoid second hand smoke

What treatments are available?

First, you always want to visit your primary care manager. He or she may be able to prescribe asthma medications that will help reduce underlying inflammation in the airways and relieve or prevent symptomatic airway narrowing. Control of inflammation should lead to reduction in airway sensitivity and help prevent airway obstruction. There are two classes of medications that are used to treat asthma; anti-inflammatory or controller agents and bronchodilators or relievers. Anti-inflammatory drugs interrupt the development of bronchial inflammation and have a preventive action.

Tobacco Cessation

There are numerous support mechanisms available to help support the cessation process. There are telephone quitlines and web-based support resources that offer the opportunity to proactively receive tobacco emails and telephone calls to support the quitting process. These resources may also be of value in helping prevent relapse.

- **Telephone Quitlines** ○ **TRICARE South Region 877-414-9949**
 - **TRICARE North Region 866-459-8766**
 - **TRICARE West Region 866-244-6870**
 - **National - 1-877-44U-QUIT (1-877-448-7848)**
 - **State- 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669)**
- **Online Web-based Resources** ○ www-nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Healthy_Living/
 - www.ucanquit2.org
 - www.smokefree.gov