



Asthma Triggers

Allergens are an important triggering factor. Examples of allergens are:

1. Pollen
2. Mold
3. Animal dander
4. Dust
5. Certain foods

Viral Infections

Viral infections of the respiratory tract also often act as a major aggravating trigger. This added irritation of the airways, including the nose, throat and lungs as well as the sinuses, often precedes attacks of asthma. The exact biological mechanism for this is not known.

Irritants

Irritants can play a large role in triggering asthma. Some examples are:

1. Tobacco smoke
2. Strong odors, such as household cleaners, paints and varnishes
3. Other chemicals such as coal and chalk dust
4. Air pollutants
5. Changing weather conditions, including changes in temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, and strong winds all are likely to affect and irritate airways

Distance Running

Distance running can also bring on an asthma attack. It has been estimated that 85% of allergic asthmatics have symptoms of wheezing following exercise, and running of this type is most likely to induce asthma, particularly in cold climates.

Industrial or Occupation Exposure to Chemical Irritants While on the Job

Studies indicate that 15% of all male cases of asthma in Japan result from exposure to industrial vapors, dust, gases or fumes.

Sensitivity to Drugs, Such as Aspirin

Asthmatic should not take any medication unless prescribed by a physician.

Emotional Anxiety

Emotional anxiety and nervous stress cause fatigue which may be responsible for worsening the asthmatic's symptoms and precipitating an attack. However, stress is really only a secondary factor of a disease that is primarily allergic in nature. These psychological factors alone cannot provoke

asthma and are more an effect rather than a cause.

Just as the power of suggestion is more powerful in some people than in others, it is important to remember that asthmatics differ with respect to the causes of their attacks. They also respond differently to medication and the amount of medication necessary to control the disease.

Adapted from the American Academy of Allergy and Immunology