

Asthma

Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition characterised by inflammation and narrowing of the airways, leading to difficulty in breathing. It is a common condition that affects people of all ages, although it often begins in childhood. Asthma symptoms can range from mild to severe, and they may vary over time.

Causes: The exact cause of asthma is not fully understood, but it is believed to be a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Common triggers for asthma symptoms include allergens (such as dust mites, pollen, and pet dander), respiratory infections, exercise, cold air, irritants (such as smoke and strong odors), and stress.

Symptoms: Asthma symptoms can vary among individuals but commonly include:

1. Wheezing: A whistling sound when breathing, often during exhaling.
2. Shortness of breath: Difficulty in getting enough air into the lungs.
3. Coughing: A persistent cough, especially at night or early morning.
4. Chest tightness: A feeling of pressure or constriction in the chest.

Diagnosis: Asthma is typically diagnosed through a combination of medical history, physical examination, and lung function tests. These tests may include spirometry, which measures the amount and speed of air exhaled, and peak flow measurements, which assess the force of air expelled from the lungs.

Treatment: The primary goal of asthma treatment is to control and manage symptoms, reduce inflammation, and prevent asthma attacks. Treatment options may include:

1. Inhalers: The most common treatment method, delivering medication directly to the airways. Inhalers may contain bronchodilators to relax the muscles around the airways or corticosteroids to reduce inflammation.
2. Long-term control medications: Taken regularly to prevent symptoms and maintain good asthma control. These medications may include inhaled corticosteroids, leukotriene modifiers, long-acting beta-agonists, or immuno-modulators.
3. Quick-relief medications: Used during an asthma attack to quickly relieve symptoms and open up the airways. Short-acting bronchodilators are commonly used for this purpose.
4. Allergy management: If allergies trigger asthma symptoms, allergen avoidance measures or allergy medications may be recommended.

It's important for individuals with asthma should work collaboratively with your doctors at SunStar Clinics to develop a personalised asthma action plan, which outlines the steps to take for managing symptoms, avoiding triggers, and using medications effectively.