

Asthma

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MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY

- 15-20% of children have asthma
- In a class of c30, 4-5 may have asthma
- Rates are falling but still approx c1400 deaths per year

Causes of Asthma

- Environment
- Hereditary
- Pollution
- Living Conditions

What is Asthma

- An inflammatory condition of the lungs which causes the airways to become over sensitive to certain triggers eg dust, viral infections and pollens.
- This causes spasms in the airways leading to airway narrowing, excessive production of mucus resulting in symptoms of asthma.

Triggers, Signs and Symptoms

- Pets
 - Exercise
 - Smoke
 - Fumes
 - Strong Smells
 - House dust mite
 - Viral infections
 - Pregnancy
 - Menstruation
 - Some Drugs
 - Food allergies
 - Pollens
 - Cold/hot air
 - ANYTHING
- Cough
 - Wheeze
 - Breathlessness
 - Tight chest

Treatment eg Inhalers

■ PREVENTER

- Usually a steroid inhaler, damps down inflammation helps to prevent symptoms of asthma. Must be taken every day.

■ RELIEVER

- Opens up the airways quickly and is taken only when needed. Increased using of reliever inhaler indicates worsening asthma.

Asthma and Exercise

- Encouragement should be given to exercise.
- Encourage child to use inhaler 20 minutes prior to exercise if asthma is induced by exercise.
- Take care with long distance running and weather condition.
- May need to build up tolerance.
- Not all children have exercise induced symptoms.

Deteriorating asthma

- Waking at night with coughing wheezing or breathlessness
- Needing to use inhaler more often
- Effects of inhaler not lasting as long as usual
- Increased symptoms during or following exercise
- There is often a period of recognisable deterioration before an attack happens
- This can be over a few days or even weeks
- In rare cases could be sudden and serious

(1) Treatment for mild Asthma

- Use reliever inhaler as soon as possible
- Stay calm and reassure child
- Ensure child is sitting upright
- Once recovered return to normal school activities and inform parents/carers.

Signs of Acute severe attack

- Extreme breathlessness or cough
- Reliever medication does not work
- Difficulty speaking
- Child is becoming exhausted or distressed

Treatment for severe asthma attack

- Encourage child to take two puffs of reliever inhaler, dial 999 and inform parents
- Whilst waiting for medical help 10 puffs of the reliever can be given if necessary
- Stay calm
- Do not restrict child's space
- Sit child upright encourage slow deep breathing

IMPORTANT

- Medicines and inhalers are prescription only medicines
- Ensure you have a care plan for the child
- Inhalers should not be used for anyone else
- Ensure parents/carers provide a spare reliever inhaler (correctly labelled for that child) whilst in school
- Emergency Asthma Kits can be accessed via your School Nurse
- ALL CHILDREN WITH INHALERS WILL BE MONITORED BY THEIR GP/ PRACTICE NURSE. IF SYMPTOMS BECOME WORSE AT SCHOOL INFORM PARENTS SO CHILD MAY BE REVIEWED.

FINALLY

- All children have a right to attend school and have their health needs met appropriately. Your school will be supported by your school nurse health team, on an individual basis to help with care plans, support and advice.
- If you are in any doubt during an incident, you must contact the emergency services and consult your first aid policy and procedures.

Questions

- 1. Briefly describe what asthma is.
- A. An inflammatory condition of the lungs that causes spasm and narrowing of the airways.

- 2. Name 3 common triggers.
- A. Pets, smoke, pollens, fumes, injections, food, drugs.

Questions

- 3. Describe how a reliever inhaler can help during an attack.
 - A. It can reduce spasm in the airways, open the airways and reduce inflammation.
- 4. What would be the appropriate treatment for a severe asthma attack.
 - A. Encourage/give two puffs of the reliever inhaler. Dial 999. Contact parents. Up to 10 puffs can be given if necessary whilst waiting for medical assistance. Use first aid procedures as per school policy if situation deteriorates.

Questions 2

- 1. Briefly describe what asthma is.
 - A. An inflammatory condition of the lungs that causes spasm and narrowing of the airways.
 - B. An inflammatory condition of the heart which causes constriction of blood flow.
 - C. A condition of the lungs, intestines and the pancreas resulting in thick mucous which results in respiratory infections and other complications
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Questions 2

- 2. What of the following are likely to trigger an asthma attack?
 - A. Pets
 - B. Smoke
 - C. Pollens
 - D. Fumes
 - E. Injections
 - F. Food
 - G. Drugs
 - H. Anything

Questions 2

- Describe how a reliever inhaler can help during an attack.
 - A. It can help prevent an mild attack getting serious
 - B. It can help cure asthma.
 - C. It can reduce spasm in the airways, open the airways and reduce inflammation.

Questions 2

- What would be the appropriate treatment for a severe asthma attack.
 - A. Dial 999. Encourage/Give two Puffs of the inhaler. Inform head teacher. Contact parents.
 - B. Contact parents. Inform head teacher. Encourage/Give two puffs on the inhaler. Dial 999.
 - C. Encourage/give two puffs of the reliever inhaler. Dial 999. Contact parents. Inform head teacher.