

Mayo Clinic Minute: Signs of asthma

It's estimated that [more than](#) 334 million people around the globe have asthma. It's a chronic disease that makes it hard to breathe. Asthma often starts in childhood, but can develop in people of any age and is common in adults as well. Symptoms can range from mild to life-threatening.

[Dr. James Li](#), a Mayo Clinic allergist, talks about signs and symptoms of asthma in this Mayo Clinic Minute.

Video	Audio
2James Li, M.D., Ph.D. Allergy and Immunology Mayo Clinic	"Asthma is a lower airway condition affecting the bronchial tubes. The typical symptoms of asthma would be shortness of breath, chest tightness, cough and wheezing."
	During what's called an asthma exacerbation, the bronchial tubes tend to constrict.
	"And there's also inflammation and swelling and mucus inside the bronchial tube, which can block the airflow."
	Dr. James Li says everyone experiences asthma differently — with different triggers.
	"Pollen or mold in the air, it's often allergic asthma coexisting with allergic rhinitis, but also exercise, cold air and viral upper respiratory infections."
	Bronchial inhalers and other asthma medication can bring quick relief.
	"If someone is experiencing an asthma exacerbation and they have trouble sleeping, trouble completing a sentence or trouble walking on level ground, that really warrants immediate attention. And there's good treatment for it."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Joel Streed.