



ABOUT ALLERGY

take control of your allergy

Asthma:

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease involving the airways in the lungs. People with asthma experience symptoms of cough, shortness of breath, wheeze (a whistling, squeaky sound when you breathe), chest tightness and fast breathing. Asthma is not a single disease, everyone experiences it differently. Diagnosis of asthma is based on symptoms, a physical examination, and lung function tests. It is important to understand better about the type of asthma you have because treatment varies for each individual. There is no cure for asthma but treatment improves quality of life.

- Allergic asthma: Allergic asthma is the most common type of asthma that usually starts in childhood and tends to run in families, It is often seen in people with other allergic diseases such as eczema, allergic rhinitis or food allergies. Inhaled corticosteroids controls symptoms for many patients with allergic asthma. Patients may outgrow their childhood around adolescent stage.

Common triggers of allergic asthma are pets, dust mite, pollen, mold and cockroach.

-Non-allergic asthma:

Non-allergic asthma is more common among adults. Women are more often affected than men. Triggers include viral infections, humidity, cold air, chemicals or fragrances. Skin tests are negative in this type of asthma.

Adult onset asthma

Adult-onset asthma does not run in families. Adult-onset asthma is often severe and needs high dose of ICS but may be ineffective in some adult patients. Most of the time, adult-onset asthma does not go away.

Aspirin/NSAIDs exacerbated asthma

Patients with this type of asthma experience worsening of symptoms within minutes of taking aspirin or other NSAIDs medication (e.g. brufen, voltaren, ponsten, indocid, etc). There is also an associated rhinitis with nasal polyp. Patients with NSAIDs exacerbated asthma must avoid aspirin and other NSAIDs.

Exercise induced asthma (EIA)

Asthma is a common trigger for asthma but patients with EIA have symptoms only during exercise. An exercise challenge test together with lung function test are done to diagnose exercise-induced asthma. Short-acting beta-agonists is often recommended 20minutes before exercise but additional treatment such as leukotriene receptor antagonist may be used for exercise-induced asthma.

Work related asthma

Asthma can either start at work (work induced asthma) or get worse at work in people with existing asthma (work exacerbated asthma). Symptoms are usually of adult onset. Work related asthma improves when not at work e.g. holidays or weekends.

Asthma in pregnancy:

Pregnant women with asthma may have a bit greater risk of delivering early. Or the infant may have a low birth weight. High blood pressure and a related condition known as pre-eclampsia are also more common in pregnant women with more severe asthma.

Treatment:

Dr Mabelane works along with each patient to create an asthma treatment plan. This plan will have information about your asthma triggers, and education for taking your medicines.

