

MANAGING Asthma DURING Respiratory Virus Season

AT THE FOREFRONT
UChicagoMedicine

Adults and children with asthma need to be especially careful to avoid respiratory viruses.

Viral infections can often trigger asthma symptoms, making asthma attacks more dangerous.

How to prepare for respiratory virus season and prevent illness

- Have your **asthma action plan** and **medications** on hand
- Stay up-to-date on **vaccinations**
- **Wash hands** frequently and avoid those who are sick
- Get plenty of **sleep**
- **Eat well** and **drink fluids**
- Use **air purifiers** to filter polluted air

When to contact your doctor

If you have asthma and develop any symptoms of a respiratory virus or asthma attack, call your doctor right away.

Respiratory Virus

Common symptoms* include:

- Congestion or runny nose
- Coughing and sneezing
- Decreased appetite or energy
- Headache or body aches
- Fever
- Sore throat

*Symptoms of a respiratory infection can vary greatly depending on the virus.

Asthma Attack

Common symptoms include:

- Chest tightness
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Needing to use a rescue inhaler more than twice in a week

Get emergency help

if you have any of these severe asthma symptoms:

- Asthma attack symptoms not relieved by rescue inhalers
- Chest retractions, skin sucking in around the neck, chest plate and/or between the ribs when inhaling
- Feeling out of breath
- Grunting or head-bobbing in children
- Lips or nails turning blue
- Severe and/or persistent chest tightness
- Sudden feelings of agitation or confusion
- Wheezing when exhaling