

## LIVING WITH ASTHMA

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Asthma is sometimes thought of as a childhood disease, but it is often diagnosed as a new condition in older people. Whether you've been living with asthma from an early age, or have just been diagnosed, you'll find a remarkable level of care available at Logansport Memorial Physician Network.

## ASTHMA IN OLDER ADULTS PRESENTS SOME SPECIAL CONCERNS

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The normal effects of aging can sometimes make asthma harder to diagnose and treat in adults. Other health problems (like emphysema or heart disease) make managing asthma more difficult. That's why talking to a pulmonologist, a specialist in treating lung conditions and diseases, is a great first step to better managing your asthma.

## EXPERT CARE FOR ASTHMA IS HERE

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At Logansport Memorial Hospital, we connect you to the highest level of specialized care when it comes to lung problems. Working alongside your primary care physician, you'll find comprehensive care focused on helping you treat and manage your symptoms so you can enjoy the most out of life.



**Abhishek Vedavalli,  
MD, MPH**

Abhishek Vedavalli, MD, MPH specializes in pulmonology and treating patients with asthma. To learn more, or schedule an appointment, call **574.753.5640**.

## HELPING YOU LIVE WELL WITH ASTHMA

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If you're living with, or have been recently diagnosed with asthma, Logansport Memorial Hospital can connect you to expert care from expert physicians who will help you manage your symptoms.

## CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT

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The staff in LMPN Pulmonology can work with you to get the referral you need from your primary care provider for an appointment.

**To schedule an appointment,  
call 574.753.5640 or to learn more, visit  
[LogansportMemorial.org/Pulmonology/](https://LogansportMemorial.org/Pulmonology/)**

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# When you're affected by Asthma

**BUILDING BETTER HEALTH**



# Helping you better understand Asthma

## WHAT IS ASTHMA?

Asthma is a chronic (long-term) lung disease that affects children and adults. When you have asthma, there is inflammation in your airways. This inflammation can make your lungs more sensitive to certain things like dust, pollen and smoke — we call these triggers. When your lungs react to these triggers, muscles around the airways can tighten and make extra mucus, which makes it hard to breathe.

Different people have different symptoms from asthma. These symptoms may come and go, but the asthma is always there. However, with treatment most people are able to manage the disease to where they have few, if any symptoms. One of the best ways to keep your asthma under control is to work with a physician and/or pulmonologist.

### Common asthma symptoms include:

- Coughing (especially at night)
- Wheezing (a whistling noise when you breathe)
- Chest tightness (a feeling that someone is squeezing your chest)
- Shortness of breath
- Breathing faster than normal
- Getting out of breath easily
- Feeling tired or weak

## SEE YOUR DOCTOR REGULARLY

Regular visits, every six months or more often if your asthma is not under control, will let your doctor check your progress. Remember, most people can live normal and active lives with the right care.

### Factors that may increase your risk for asthma include:

- Regularly breathing in cigarette smoke, including secondhand smoke
- Repeated exposure to industrial or agricultural chemicals
- A family history of asthma
- Being overweight
- Having allergies
- A mother who smoked during pregnancy

## DIAGNOSING ASTHMA

If you have any of the symptoms or risk factors listed here, seeing a pulmonologist is a smart move. A checkup is the best way to determine if you have asthma. Your doctor may use several tests to pin point what is causing your symptoms:

- Spirometry — a breathing test to measure how much air you can breathe in and out, and how fast
- Chest x-ray
- Electrocardiogram — to show whether you have heart disease
- Blood test

Accurate diagnosis is key as asthma is treated differently from other diseases with the same symptoms.

## CAN ASTHMA BE CURED?

Unfortunately, asthma cannot be cured. But it can be controlled with the right treatment. The goals of asthma treatment are to:

- Prevent asthma symptoms and asthma attacks
- Maintain normal activity levels, including exercise and other physical activities
- Preserve normal or near-normal lung function
- Reduce, or do away with asthma medication side effects

## SIMPLE STEPS TO HELP YOU CONTROL ASTHMA

### Talk openly with your doctor

Tell your doctor of any concerns about your asthma, medications or health. Be honest about any problems — and ask questions if you do not understand or remember the information your doctor has shared with you. If you take inhaler medications, check with your physician to make sure you're taking it correctly.

Share with your doctor any health problems such as arthritis, which can make it difficult to take certain medications. It's also important to talk to your doctor about all the medicines you take, even non-prescription medicines like eye drops and aspirin.

### Watch for early signs and act quickly

Most asthma attacks start slowly. You can learn to predict symptoms you have, how bad they are and when you have them. Your doctor may also want you to use a "peak flow meter," which is a small plastic tool that you blow into so it can measure how fast the air is coming from your airways. If you respond early to the first signs that your asthma may be getting worse, you can prevent serious asthma attacks. It is really important to pay attention to your symptoms because your "peak flow" can be normal even when your asthma is getting worse.

### Stay away from asthma triggers

Triggers are things that make your asthma worse like dust, pollen and smoke. Yet what causes asthma to flare up in one person may not have the same effect on another. Work with your doctor to determine your triggers and how best to avoid them. Some common triggers are:

- Dust mites
- Animal dander
- Cockroach allergens
- Indoor and outdoor mold
- Food preservatives (sulfites)
- Wood smoke
- Strong odors and sprays
- Exercise
- Cold air
- Some medications (beta blockers, aspirin)