

Stress and Asthma

Stress is the reaction to a potentially threatening or demanding situation, which can be acute or chronic

Does stress cause asthma attacks?

Many people report that stress triggers their asthma and this has been linked to poor asthma prognosis



Who is most affected?

People with co-existing asthma and mental health problems, and people with severe asthma



Some symptoms of breathlessness from stress may overlap with asthma-induced breathlessness

Stress Symptoms

Breathlessness
Fast heart rate
Muscle tension
Headaches
Sweating
Chest tightness



Asthma Symptoms

Wheeze
Breathlessness
Dyspnoea
Chest tightness
Cough
Night waking

Comorbid conditions may result in confusion as to the cause of symptoms. Panic attacks and asthma attacks require different management approaches

Questionnaires and clinical assessments can be used to identify stress levels and asthma control

Use a combination of strategies to reduce stress



Enhance coping skills (cognitive behavioural therapy or mindfulness-based stress reduction)



Finding calm during a stressful event (through breathing and relaxation techniques)



Address comorbidities that affect stress-induced asthma



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