

Managing Exercise Induced Asthma

What is Exercise-Induced Asthma?

Exercise-Induced Asthma (EIA), also called **Exercise-Induced Bronchoconstriction (EIB)**, occurs when **airways narrow during or after exercise**, causing difficulty breathing. Symptoms are triggered by **cold, dry air, high-intensity workouts, or allergens**.

Symptoms of Exercise-Induced Asthma

- ✓ Shortness of breath during or after exercise
- ✓ Wheezing or coughing
- ✓ Chest tightness or discomfort
- ✓ Fatigue or reduced endurance
- ✓ Symptoms typically peak **5-10 minutes after stopping exercise** and improve within 30-60 minutes

Prevention & Management Tips

Before Exercise

- ✓ **Use a bronchodilator (if prescribed)** - Take **albuterol (rescue inhaler) 15-30 minutes before exercise**.
- ✓ **Warm up for 10-15 minutes** with light cardio and stretching.
- ✓ **Avoid outdoor exercise in cold, dry, or high-pollen environments** - Use a scarf or mask in cold weather.
- ✓ **Stay hydrated** - Dehydration can worsen airway irritation.

During Exercise

- ✓ **Breathe through your nose** to warm and humidify air.
- ✓ **Pace yourself** - Avoid sudden bursts of intense activity.
- ✓ **Choose low-risk activities** like swimming (humid air), walking, or cycling instead of running or high-intensity sports.

After Exercise

- ✓ **Cool down for 5-10 minutes** to help prevent airway spasms.
- ✓ **Use your inhaler if symptoms appear** - If breathing doesn't improve within 15 minutes, seek medical help.

When to Seek Medical Help

Symptoms do not improve with an inhaler
Severe shortness of breath or wheezing
Lips or fingernails turn **blue or gray**

Chest pain or extreme fatigue

Bottom Line

- ✓ **Use an inhaler before exercise if prescribed.**
- ✓ **Warm up and cool down properly.**
- ✓ **Avoid cold air, allergens, and extreme exertion.**
- ✓ **Seek medical help for severe symptoms.**

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Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.