

Health Tips for Parents

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Does my child have asthma?

Many infants and toddlers experience occasional episodes of wheezing caused by respiratory tract infections, but that doesn't mean they suffer from asthma, a chronic disorder that causes swelling and inflammation of the airways.



Risk factors, including a family history of parental or sibling asthma, eczema and food allergies can increase a child's risk to develop asthma. About 60 percent of children with asthma will grow out of it by adulthood. However, only 5 to 30 percent of children with severe asthma will outgrow their asthma by adulthood.



moderate or severe — so it's important to have close follow-up with your pediatrician." Infants and children with asthma are at risks for asthma episodes, which can be dangerous. In addition to wheezing, other important signs and symptoms to look out for include shortness of breath, chest tightness, labored breathing, low energy, and poor feeding. If your child has these symptoms, they should be urgently evaluated.

"If you suspect your child has asthma, you should bring your child to your pediatrician for an evaluation," says June Liu, MD, a pediatrician with the UCLA's West Los Angeles Pediatrics office. "The types of medicines or treatments that are recommended depend on the severity of asthma — intermittent or persistent mild,

Physicians typically diagnose asthma by looking at the frequency and timing of episodes, the presence of risk factors and a child's response to medication, Dr. Liu says. These factors will determine how it is treated. When allergies are suspected, try to avoid common environmental triggers.

Common asthma triggers:

- cigarette smoke
- dust mites
- respiratory tract infections
- mold
- cockroaches
- air pollution
- animal dander



Get the proper treatment

"Poorly controlled asthma can significantly impact routine activities, disrupt learning and sleep, and result in missed days of school, which can cause financial and work-related problems for parents," Dr. Liu says. "It's very important for a child with asthma to receive proper treatment because the whole family is affected."

This information is provided courtesy of the pediatricians at Mattel Children's Hospital UCLA. UCLA Health pediatricians are conveniently located in your neighborhood. In addition to our Children's Health Center in Westwood, we have offices in Brentwood, Manhattan Beach, Santa Monica and West Los Angeles. All health and health-related information contained in this publication is intended to be general in nature and should not be used as a substitute for a visit with a healthcare professional.