

What does Asthma feel like?

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One way to understand what asthma feels like is to **make a fist** with a small tunnel, and place it up against your mouth. Now, blow out like you are blowing up a balloon. Feel the air as it touches your hand at the end of the tube? That is like normal breathing.

Then slowly close your fist so that the tunnel becomes, smaller, and smaller, until it is tightly shut. Feel how the air doesn't come through anymore? This is what a person suffering from asthma feels like during a serious asthma attack.

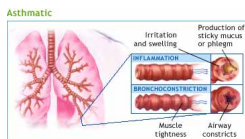


Breathing during an Asthma Attack:

When a person has an asthma attack three things happen in the airways:

1. **Swelling:** The walls of the airways get thicker, this is also known as swelling. **Swelling in the airways makes it difficult for air to move into the lungs.**
2. **Mucus:** The airways produce more mucus. Just like when you have a cold and your nose is “stopped up”, **mucus in the airways blocks the airways and makes it difficult for air to move into the lungs.**
3. **Tightening:** **The muscles of the airways suddenly tighten like a rubber band**, making the airways even smaller. This tightening is known as a **bronchospasm**. A bronchospasm makes it even harder for air to move into the lungs.

During an asthma attack, swelling, buildup of mucus in the airways, and muscle tightening all make the airways smaller and make it difficult to breathe.



[What happens when a person has an Asthma Attack?](#) [up](#) [Does asthma affect all people in the same way?](#) [»](#)

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