

No 2. Symptoms of Asthma.

The four main symptoms of asthma are:-

- **Coughing**
- **Wheezing**
- **Breathlessness**
- **A tight feeling round the chest**

1. Not everybody will get all these symptoms and any of them may be caused by other conditions. Your doctor may need other information or tests to make the right diagnosis.
2. Asthma symptoms are often worse at night or early in the morning.
3. Symptoms can vary greatly from person to person. At one end of the spectrum a lot of people only have symptoms when they are exposed to a certain trigger such as a cold, a dusty room or a hairy animal. At the other end of the spectrum a very few people have symptoms all the time.
4. In any one person symptoms may vary from time to time. If your symptoms are getting worse you should let your doctor or nurse know as soon as possible.

A recent Royal College of Physicians guideline suggests that the three most important questions a doctor or nurse should ask to assess asthma symptom control are:-

1. **Have you had any difficulty sleeping because of your asthma symptoms (Including cough)?**
2. **Have you had your usual asthma symptoms during the day (Cough/wheeze/breathlessness/chest tightness)?**
3. **Has your asthma interfered with your usual activities (Work/housework/school etc)?**

If the answer to any of these questions is yes it suggests your asthma is not properly controlled and your treatment may need revised. You and your nurse or doctor may also use peak flow rate measurements to help make this decision.

We are happy to consider requests for this publication in other languages or formats such as large print.

Please call **01324 590886** (24hrs), or email fv.disabilitydepartment@nhs.scot

