



Asthma in Athletes

Are breathing problems affecting your athletic performance?

Exercise is the most common trigger of breathing problems in people with asthma. Eighty to 90% of all individuals **with** asthma have symptoms when they exercise. This is called **exercise-induced bronchospasm (EIB)**. About 10% of the general population **without** asthma, have EIB when they exercise.

How common is EIB in athletes? Athletes are more susceptible to EIB. A recent study performed by OSU's Pulmonary Division and Sports Medicine Division found that approximately 40% of OSU varsity athletes have EIB. This is similar to the findings of researchers studying Olympic and other elite athletes, who found EIB in 20%-50% athletes **without** asthma. The majority of these athletes did not know they had EIB.

What are the symptoms of EIB? Symptoms can vary from person to person. The most common symptoms are shortness of breath, fast breathing, chest tightness, wheezing, coughing or just feeling tired. The symptoms usually start within 5-15 minutes of beginning exercise **or** 5-20 minutes after stopping exercise.

How is EIB diagnosed? EIB can be difficult to diagnose by history alone. Specific testing is needed to make an accurate diagnosis of EIB. The USA Olympic Committee recommends EVH (Eucapnic Voluntary Hyperventilation test) as the test of choice for their athletes with EIB. EVH testing is performed at the Martha Moorehouse Medical Plaza on Kenny Road or at University Hospital Pulmonary Function Laboratory.

We can help you get back in the game. The Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care, Allergy and Sleep Medicine in collaboration with the Division of Sports Medicine offer an **Asthma in Athletes Clinic**. We are dedicated to improving the quality of life for those with asthma and EIB through accurate diagnosis, individualized treatment plans and education tailored to your needs and lifestyle. We also seek new treatment options through asthma research. Many patients who are treated for EIB are able to compete and exercise more effectively after treatment. Athletes with a history of asthma have competed at the highest levels of competition including Olympic events, NFL, and NBA. A few such notable athletes with EIB include: Jerome Bettis (NFL), Kaitlin Sandeno (Olympic gold medalist in swimming), and Dennis Rodman (NBA).

Asthma in Athletes Clinic at The Lung Center. The clinic is for athletes **16 years old and older**, with or without physician-diagnosed asthma, who are having symptoms during exercise. The asthma team consists of:

- John Mastronarde, MD
- Jeffrey Weiland, MD
- Jonathan Parsons, MD
- Cathy Benninger, RN, CNP, certified asthma educator

If you would like to schedule an appointment or obtain additional information please contact us at **614-293-4925**.

Asthma Clinical Research Trials. We are currently recruiting volunteers with asthma to participate in one of the following:

- Exercise therapy for asthma (ETA trial). Trial evaluating the effect of regular exercise on asthma in adults (18 yrs and up)
- Role of gastroesophageal reflux disease in asthma (SARA trial). Trial evaluating the effect of treatment for GERD on asthma in adults (18 yrs and up).
- Asthma registry which is for people who are not eligible for current trials but who are interested in participating in future clinical trials. (16 yrs and up)

If you would like to learn more about our ongoing **asthma research trials** please contact us at: **614-293-4978** or via email: lungresearch@osumc.edu

**For physician services and physical therapy call
OSU Sports Medicine Center at 614.293.3600**