



Asthma Can Appear at Any Age

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: I am 47, and my doctor tells me I have asthma. Is that possible? I thought it was a children's disease. One of the medicines the doctor put me on is a cortisone-type inhaler. This has me scared silly. I don't want to stay on a cortisone medicine for life. I have heard it does too many bad things. What do you have to say about this? -- M.L.

ANSWER: Asthma can make an appearance at any age. The incidence of it peaks between the ages of 4 and 10, and again in the 40s. It's not only a childhood illness.

During an asthma attack, the airways (bronchi) narrow because the muscles wrapped around them go into spasm. That makes it hard for air to get into and out of the lungs. Added to the airway constriction is an outpouring of thick mucus within the airways, another obstruction to the flow of air through these passages.

For an acute asthma attack, medicines that relax the muscles wrapped around the airways are used, most often delivered via an inhaler. The onset of action of these medicines is quick, but their duration is only about four to six hours. So it is also important to administer to asthmatics medicines that last longer.

Inhaled cortisone medicines are such drugs, and they're essential for asthma control. They soothe irritated airways and prevent the contraction of airway muscles. They also prevent the production of thick mucus. It can take up to four weeks before the effect of these medicines is appreciated.

Inhaled cortisone doesn't cause the serious side effects that prolonged use of oral and injectable cortisone can. Your health isn't going to be in danger from its use. Your health is going to improve with its use. You might not have to use it for life.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: Enclosed is an ad for vitamin B-4. Is it as good as the ad says? -- L.F.

ANSWER: Sometime in the past, scientists thought there was a vitamin B-4 whose lack was responsible for slow growth in animals. It was called adenine. Adenine is real, but it's not a vitamin. It's the building material for DNA and RNA. It's found in many foods. You don't need a supplement of it.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: When my 68-year-old husband exercises, he smells like rotten onions. He claims that deodorants and antiperspirants are harmful. He says you need to let your armpits breathe. I say he's wrong. -- Anon.


ANSWER: Many people believe that

deodorants and antiperspirants are harmful. I'm not one of them. Armpits don't breathe. The lungs do.

Your husband can wash under the arms before and after exercising. Skin bacteria cause the odor, not sweating.

Dr. Donohue regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but he will incorporate them in his column whenever possible. Readers may write him or request an order form of available health newsletters at P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Health newsletters also may be ordered from www.rbmamall.com.

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The Moorestown Garden Club held its 56th Annual Flower Show on Saturday, August 15th and Sunday, August 16th at the Salem U.C.C. Church of Moorestown, Rt. 946 and Copella Rd.

The theme for this year's show was "Down To Earth". There were flower arrangements in 10 theme-related sections, as well as specimens including annuals, perennials, roses, bulbs and tubers, houseplants, fruits and vegetables.

Admission was free and refreshments were available. There was a boutique and a raffle featuring many prizes. If you missed out on this event, make sure to stop out to enjoy the

many beautiful arrangements and specimens at their next Flower Show.



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