

staying  
**HEALTHY**



**HORIZON**  
HEALTH

**Can adults develop asthma?**

Asthma is usually diagnosed in children. However, anyone can develop asthma – even older adults.

Asthma is a respiratory condition that makes breathing difficult. Exposure to various irritants and substances can “trigger” asthma. These include pollen, air pollution, medications, and even exercise. Triggers cause airways to narrow, swell, and produce extra mucus, causing coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, and a feeling of tightness in the chest.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, most childhood asthma disappears in adulthood. So, what causes adults to develop asthma, also called adult-onset asthma? The answer is not always known.

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America states that 30 percent of adult asthma cases are triggered by allergies. People who are allergic to cats, for example, may have an increased risk for developing adult-onset asthma. Additionally, different illnesses, viruses, or

infections can be a factor for developing adult-onset asthma.

Adults have a higher risk for developing asthma if they are female (due to hormonal fluctuations); overweight or obese; or are exposed to allergens, such as cigarette smoke, chemicals, mold, or dust.

Adults with asthma have an increased risk for flare-ups, and even hospitalization, due to the following reasons:

- Asthma medications can be less effective later in life.
- Oral steroids can worsen glaucoma, cataracts, and osteoporosis.
- Beta-blockers for heart problems can increase the severity of asthma.
- The muscles supporting deep breathing are weaker in adults.

There is no cure for asthma. However, symptoms can be controlled by avoiding known triggers that cause an individual’s asthma attack, taking the proper medications, and using a fast-relief inhaler (bronchodilator).

Contact your healthcare provider if you or someone you know is experiencing asthma symptoms.

**Mike Marx, RRT**

Mike is a registered respiratory therapist (RRT) and manager of the Respiratory Therapy Department at Horizon Health. He joined the organization in 2017.



Mike manages a staff of 13 employees who work in in Respiratory Care Services, Sleep Services, and Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

Respiratory Therapy provides a variety of services, including pulmonary function tests, EKGs (electrocardiogram for the heart) and EEGs (electroencephalogram for the brain). Conditions treated include general breathing problems, asthma, bronchitis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Mike has an associate’s degree in respiratory therapy from Vincennes University. He is registered by the National Board of Respiratory Care.

Mike was born and raised in Princeton, Indiana. He and his wife, Lori, have two sons: Gavan, 25, and Cameron, 22. In his spare time, Mike enjoys reading and handyman work.

**Paris Community Hospital**  
721 E. Court St., Paris, IL 61944

**Oakland Clinic**  
5 S. Walnut St., Oakland, IL 61943

**Chrisman Clinic**  
112 W. Madison Ave., Chrisman, IL 61924

**EZ Care—Marshall**  
1602 N. Illinois Hwy 1, Marshall, IL 62441

**Paris Clinic**  
727 E. Court St., Paris, IL 61944

**EZ Care**  
1 Phipps Lane, Paris, IL 61944

**Senior Care**  
15323 US Highway 150, Paris, IL 61944

**MyHorizonHealth.org**



## Is it asthma or something else?

Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, and tightness in the chest – could it be asthma? Possibly, or it may be something completely different, likely allergies.

Allergies are different than asthma, but the two often occur together, according to the Mayo Clinic. The same substances that trigger hay fever symptoms may also cause asthma symptoms. In some people, skin or food allergies can cause asthma symptoms, which is called allergic asthma or allergy-induced asthma.

Allergies are an immune system response, or oversensitivity, to an environmental “trigger” (known as an allergen), such as pollen, dust, mold, pet dander, or certain foods. Signs of an allergic reaction include itchy eyes, nose, mouth or ears, sneezing, runny nose, dry skin or hives, cough, wheezing, or tightness in the chest. According to the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, allergies can trigger an asthma attack. However, asthma is present in some people without allergies.

Asthma is an underlying inflammation of the lungs that is always present. Asthma constricts the muscles around the airways, causing wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath. The bronchial tubes tighten and air flow is reduced. While allergens provoke most asthma attacks, other triggers include smoke, cold or humid air, strong odors, and strenuous exercise.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) can create asthma-like symptoms as well. COPD, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis, is very common in older adults, especially those who are, or have been, smokers.

According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, in some cases asthma symptoms can mimic other illnesses or diseases, especially in older adults. A hiatal hernia, stomach problems, heart failure, and rheumatic arthritis have many of the same symptoms as asthma.

Individuals who have asthma symptoms should not ignore them, states the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. The symptoms may mean a person does, in fact, have asthma or a completely different condition. Not seeking treatment for asthma can contribute to a greater loss of lung function. Though not curable, asthma can be managed with various treatments.

## SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER Community Health Programs

### HEALTH SCREENINGS

#### September & October

» Blood sugar, blood pressure, and lipid panel (HDL, LDL, and tryglycerides) screenings will be available at the following clinic locations.

**Oakland Clinic**–Sept. 13 @ 7:30–8:30 am

**Paris Clinic**–Sept. 20 & Oct. 18 @ 7–9 am

**Chrisman Clinic**–Oct. 8 @ 7:30–8:30 am

Fasting for eight hours in advance required. Cost is \$25 at each location. Call 217-466-4228.

### EZ CARE—MARSHALL

#### September 1

» The EZ Care—Marshall walk-in clinic is now open seven days a week. Hours are Monday-Friday, from 9 am to 7 pm, and weekends from 10 am to 6 pm.

### CLINICS CLOSED

#### September 2

» Horizon Health clinics in Paris, Chrisman, and Oakland will be closed for Labor Day.

EZ Care in Paris and Marshall will be open from 9 am to 7 pm.

### FREE ADULT/CHILD/INFANT CPR/AED CLASS

#### October 7

» The non-healthcare provider course teaches basic CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED); 8 am to 1 pm in Conference Room D at Paris Community Hospital. Call 217-466-4045. When calling, leave your name and you will be registered.

### MOVIE NIGHT

#### October 12

» Join Horizon Health for this free community appreciation event sponsored at dusk at Twin Lakes Park. Free popcorn and drinks will be available. The name of the movie will follow.

### VOLUNTEERS' CHOCOLATE SALE

#### October 21 & 22

» The PCH Volunteers will hold their South Bend Chocolate Company sale from 8 am to 4 pm by the rotunda entrance to the Paris Clinic.