

# How to deal with an asthma attack



## What is asthma?

Asthma is a condition caused by an allergic reaction in the lungs, often to substances such as dust, traffic fumes, or pollen. Muscles surrounding the bronchioles go into spasm and constrict, making it very difficult for the patient to breathe.



## Signs & Symptoms

- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezy breath sounds, originating from the lungs
- Difficulty speaking
- Pale, clammy skin
- Grey or blue lips and skin (cyanosis)
- Casualty will become exhausted in a severe attack
- May become unconscious and stop breathing in a prolonged attack



## Treatment of asthma attack

- Keep calm and reassure the casualty
- Help the casualty to sit upright, leaning on a table or chair if necessary
- Help the casualty to take their own inhaler
- If the attack is prolonged or appears to be severe and medication is not effective, dial 999 for an ambulance
- Do not take casualty into the cold air
- Keep casualty upright – even if they become too weak to sit up on their own. Only lay the casualty down if they become unconscious
- Be prepared to carry out resuscitation



**IF IN DOUBT CALL 999 OR 112  
IMMEDIATELY**