

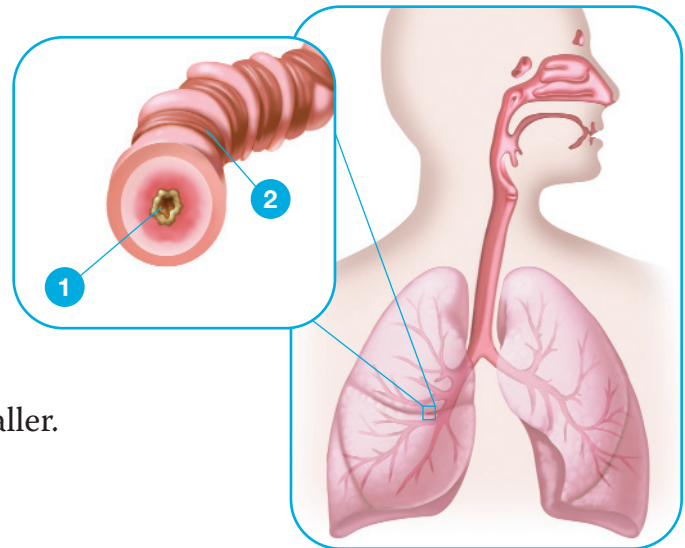
# The Asthma Flare-up

When you breathe, air goes in and out of your lungs through tubes called airways. When you have asthma, your airways may get smaller when you are around your asthma triggers. This is called a flare-up. Talk to your doctor about how to identify an asthma flare-up.

## What Happens During a Flare-up?

Two main things happen **during** a flare-up that make it hard to breathe:

- 1 The airways swell and fill with mucus.
- 2 The muscles around the airways tighten. This also makes the airways smaller.



## Warning Signs

You may have warning signs hours **before** a flare-up begins. Everyone's warning signs are different. Check the signs that happen to you.

- Wheezing
- Getting out of breath easily
- Tightness in the chest
- Increased coughing and mucus
- Drop in peak flow meter reading
- Breathing faster than normal
- Needing quick-relief (rescue) medicine more than twice a week
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## What to Do During an Asthma Flare-up

- Follow your Asthma Action Plan and directions from your doctor, based on your asthma symptoms and peak flow.
- Take quick-relief (rescue) medicine as directed by your doctor.
- Relax. Stay calm and try to breathe slowly and deeply.
- Get help when you need it. Tell someone if you notice it's getting hard to breathe.
- A severe asthma flare-up can be life-threatening. Get help fast.