

Name of Child: _____ Date: _____

RAD (Reactive Airway Disease) and Asthma

What it is:

The lungs are extra sensitive in **RAD (reactive airway disease)** and **asthma**. They react to things like cats, exercise or colds. Some people have sensitive skin, where soap makes the skin red, swollen and itchy. Other people have sensitive lungs.

Usually in RAD or asthma, there are long periods of time when there are no symptoms, and times when there are attacks, flare-ups or flares. Sometimes the asthma symptoms come almost daily.

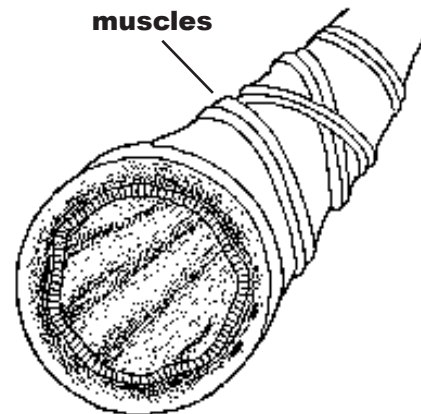
Signs and symptoms of an episode of RAD or asthma:

- dry cough
- wheeze
- hard to breathe
- hurts to breathe
- tight feeling in chest
- feel scared

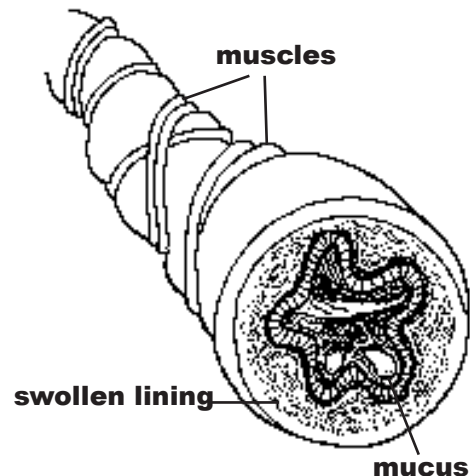
What is happening in an episode of RAD or asthma?

Three changes happen in the lungs during an asthma episode:

1. The inside **lining** of the airway or breathing tube becomes **swollen** and **inflamed**. When the airway swells up, **the opening for air gets smaller**. This means less air can get in and out of the lungs.



normal breathing tube



breathing tube during a RAD or asthma flare

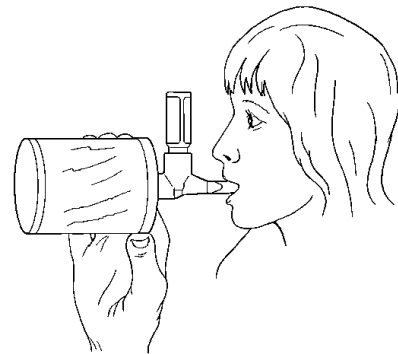
2. The **muscles** around the airway **tighten** or **spasm**. This is called **bronchoconstriction**. When the airways tighten, they get smaller, and less air can pass through.
3. The lungs make **extra mucus**. This can plug the small airways and make it harder to move air in and out of the lungs.

The goals of RAD and asthma control are:

- No symptoms or minor symptoms.
- Sleeping through the night without symptoms.
- No time off from school due to symptoms.
- Being able to be active and play sports.
- No emergency room visits or overnight stays in the hospital.
- Few or no side effects from the medicine for RAD or asthma.

Treatments:

- Prevent RAD and asthma episodes by knowing what your **triggers** are and keep away from them, if you can.
- Follow your **Asthma Action Plan**.
- A **peak flow meter can** measure how much air you can blow out. The number you get on the meter can tell you if a RAD or asthma flare might start soon.
- **Medicine** is used every day to prevent RAD or asthma symptoms, to control the swelling and spasms in the airway and to loosen the mucus.



**RAD and asthma
can be controlled.**

RAD and asthma can be controlled.

- You and the health care team work together to meet the goals of asthma control. Keep your appointments. Make sure you understand your Asthma Action Plan. Make sure you understand what medicines you need every day and what medicines to take for asthma symptoms.

- If you are not meeting your asthma goals, talk to your doctor or nurse.
They may be able to make changes in your Asthma Action Plan that will help you meet your goals.

Now that you've read this:

- Describe RAD or asthma to your nurse, doctor, or respiratory therapist.
(Check when done.)
- Tell your nurse, doctor, or respiratory therapist what you can do to control RAD and asthma. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,
 call your child's doctor or call _____

If you want to know more about child health and illness,
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-933-1400
866-933-6459
www.phoenixchildrens.org
Facebook: [facebook.com/theemilycenter](https://www.facebook.com/theemilycenter)
Twitter: @emilycenter
Pinterest: [pinterest.com/emilycenter](https://www.pinterest.com/emilycenter)

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

September 19, 2014 • Draft in family review
#28 • Written by Judy Harris, MS, RN and updated by Ron Evans, RT
Illustrated by Dennis Swain and Irene Takamizu
This handout is also available in Spanish as #233/28s

RAD (Reactive Airway Disease) and Asthma

Name of Health Care Provider: _____

Date returned: _____ db

Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.

Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read? Yes No

easy to read? Yes No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read? Yes No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading
this handout? Yes No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any
questions about the subject? Yes No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes

No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

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Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-933-1395

Thank you for helping us!