

# Asthma and Anxiety: DOUBLE TROUBLE



**A**sthma and anxiety often go hand-in-hand. Anxiety and stress can act as asthma triggers, setting off an attack. Likewise, the wheezing and coughing of asthma are instantly anxiety-producing, so that a vicious cycle of wheezing-anxiety-breathlessness-panic begins.

That's why paying attention to your mind and emotions is as important as taking care of your body for asthma control. Stress can bring on anxiety and aggravate asthma symptoms; it can also make you more sensitive to your asthma triggers.

How can you get a grip on your emotions and help keep asthma symptoms at bay? Here are a few tips from asthma experts:

- when stressful situations are coming up, be alert and aware. Either avoid stressors or plan in advance how you will deal with them.
- eat a healthful diet and maintain a healthy weight so you feel well.

- work on getting enough sleep. Allow enough time to sleep and keep your bedroom cool, dark and quiet at night.
- exercise to help relieve stress. If you don't already exercise, build it into your schedule. Go take a walk; repeat every single day! This will also help you sleep.
- plan your day so you don't feel overwhelmed. Allow enough time to get everything done. Make contingency plans if necessary. Ask for help if you need it.
- stop smoking just for today...tomorrow... always! Call Tobacco Free Florida at 1-877-822-6669 to begin your journey.
- try yoga or tai chi to train yourself to relax. Set aside time to meditate every day, then do it.
- ask your PCP about breathing techniques to help control asthma symptoms.



**Learning to manage both your asthma and your stressors will help you stay healthy, peaceful and avoid the double trouble of asthma and anxiety!**