

# 7 Respiratory system

asthma

bronchial tubes

lungs

breathe

Hyde's Medical Dictionary

## Illnesses of the Respiratory System

alveoli

**Asthma** - Asthma is a chronic disease of the **lungs**. It involves inflammation of the **bronchial tubes** and other airways. This causes wheezing, coughing, and difficulty **breathing**. One way to treat asthma is to **inhale** medicine using an inhaler.

**Emphysema** - Emphysema is a progressive respiratory disease. It is the result of bronchial tube damage. In emphysema, the **alveoli** lose their shape and functionality when the person **exhales**. As a result, less **oxygen** is allowed to enter the bloodstream. Smoking tobacco is one of the most common causes of emphysema.

### Get ready!

1 Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

- 1 What are some parts of the respiratory system?
- 2 What are some common ailments of the respiratory system?

### Reading

2 Read the passage from a medical dictionary. Then, choose the correct answers.

- 1 What is the main topic of the passage?
  - A comparing treatments of respiratory illnesses
  - B defining two types of respiratory illnesses
  - C categorizing parts of the respiratory system
  - D explaining how oxygen enters the blood
- 2 Which of the following is NOT a symptom of asthma?
  - A wheezing
  - B coughing
  - C inflamed bronchial tubes
  - D excessive oxygen entering the blood
- 3 When do alveoli lose their shape in a person with emphysema?
  - A when the person exhales
  - B when the person inhales
  - C when bronchial tubes become inflamed
  - D when the person takes medicine

### Vocabulary

3 Fill in the blanks with the correct words and phrases from the word bank.

word BANK

asthma

lungs

bronchial tubes

exhale

oxygen

- 1 Air passes into the lungs from the trachea through the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Sam's \_\_\_\_\_ makes him cough and wheeze.
- 3 Emphysema makes it difficult to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 The \_\_\_\_\_ are the main organs of the respiratory system.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ is a naturally occurring gas essential to human survival.

**4** Write a word that is similar in meaning to the underlined part.

- 1 To treat Jan's asthma, the doctor gave her medicine to breathe in. \_ n \_ \_ l e
- 2 People with respiratory illness often find it difficult to inhale and exhale. \_ r \_ \_ t \_ e
- 3 Small air sacs in the lungs are the endpoints of the respiratory airway. \_ l \_ e \_ l i
- 4 The patient suffers from damaged and misshapen alveoli. \_ \_ p \_ y \_ \_ m \_
- 5 The network of organs and airways responsible for gas exchange can be adversely affected by smoking. \_ e \_ \_ i \_ \_ t \_ r \_ \_ y \_ \_ e \_

**5** Listen and read the passage from a medical dictionary again. What happens to the alveoli in people with emphysema?

## Listening

**6** Listen to a conversation between a doctor and a patient. Mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- 1 \_ The woman has had asthma for years.
- 2 \_ The woman's new illness is curable.
- 3 \_ The man writes the woman a prescription.

**7** Listen again and complete the conversation.

**Doctor:** Good morning, Mrs. Simmons. I've taken a look at your chest x-rays.

**Patient:** Yes. And 1 \_\_\_\_\_?

**Doctor:** I'm 2 \_\_\_\_\_, it appears to be emphysema.

**Patient:** Oh really? I thought it was just my 3 \_\_\_\_\_.

**Doctor:** Well, you've had asthma for years. But this is an entirely new 4 \_\_\_\_\_.

**Patient:** Can it be cured?

**Doctor:** Unfortunately, emphysema is incurable. But there are 5 \_\_\_\_\_ that can slow its progression.

**Patient:** I hope they work. I just want to be able to 6 \_\_\_\_\_ well.

## Speaking

**8** With a partner, act out the roles below based on Task 7. Then, switch roles.

**USE LANGUAGE SUCH AS:**

*I've taken a look at ...*  
*It appears to be ...*  
*Can it be ...*

**Student A:** You are a doctor. Talk to Student B about:

- a respiratory illness
- whether it can be cured
- treatment options

**Student B:** You are a patient. Talk to Student A about treating your respiratory illness.

## Writing

**9** Use the conversation from Task 8 to fill out the doctor's prescription note.

**Doctor:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Prescription Note*

**Patient Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Diagnosis:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prescription:** \_\_\_\_\_