Asthma

Disease of the Respiratory System

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Asthma is a disease of the respiratory system, according to Merriam-Webster online dictionary; asthma is described and defined as

“a chronic lung disorder that is marked by recurring episodes of airway obstruction (as from bronchospasm) manifested by labored breathing accompanied especially by wheezing and coughing and by a sense of constriction in the chest, and that is triggered by hyperreactivity to various stimuli (as allergens or rapid change in air temperature)”

and the respiratory system is described and defined as “a system of organs functioning in respiration and in humans consisting especially of the nose, nasal passages, pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi, and lungs”. Asthma affects the lungs by inflaming and narrowing the airways. The inflammation and narrowing of the airways are recurring and causes abnormal sounds, (wheezing being the most common), shortness of breath, chest tightness, and coughing, when breathing. Asthma is a disease that is incurable but manageable and effects many people. According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NIHLBI), “Asthma affects people of all ages, but it most often starts during childhood. In the United States, more than 25 million people are known to have asthma. About 7 million of these people are children.” In this essay I will further discuss asthmas’ pathophysiology, signs/symptoms, diagnosis and clinical findings in blood work/lab values, histology, orthopedic, neurological examination, X-ray/MRI/CT or other imaging results, homeopathic treatments and short term and long term effects of the disease.

The pathophysiology of asthma is truly intricate but according to Michael J. Morris MD, in his Medscape article titled Asthma, although the pathophysiology of asthma is of such
complex, it can be broken down into its main components which are airway inflammation, intermittent airflow obstruction and bronchial hyper responsiveness. Airway inflammation in asthma can be of sudden onset (acute), persisting (chronic) or between acute and chronic (subacute). Airway inflammation is most commonly caused by excess airway secretion. Airflow obstruction is most commonly caused by various changes to include but not limited to airway edema, bronchoconstriction, mucous plug and airway remodeling. Airway inflammation and airflow obstruction leads to bronchial hyper responsiveness (increase in the respiratory systems sensitivity to airway inflammation/narrowing). Other causes of asthma include Occupational Asthma which is caused by working in hazardous industries that expose them to irritants such as flour dust from grains, diisocyante, biological detergents and metallic dust. Allergic (extrinsic/atopic) Asthma, this type of asthma is caused by genetic factors. Emotional Asthma which is caused by emotional responses; examples are stress, and anxiety. Infective or Intrinsic Asthma, this type of asthma is caused by bronchial or upper respiratory tract infections.

Diagnosing Asthmas takes a patient medical and family history, physical examination, along with other testing. It is important to know the patients past medical and family history of asthma and allergies, along with how often their symptoms usually occur throughout their past. A physical examination involves a doctor listening to patients breathing, to check for abnormal breath sounds such as wheezing, observation to look for effort it takes for patient to breathe, signs of allergies or asthma such as swollen nasal and oral passages, and runny nose. Testing is important because many other illnesses such as isolated attacks of non-paroxysmal dyspnea, renal asthma, cardiac, asthma, and bronchitis can very closely mimic asthma, and lead to improper diagnosis. Testing involved to diagnose asthma include, Allergen sensitivity testing, this test is also sometimes called and skin prick test, puncture or scratch test, it checks for
instantaneous responses, and reactions to up to 40 different substances. Bronchoprovocation testing using spirometry to measure lung functions. Chest x-ray, and Electrocardiogram (EKG) to rule other disease or illnesses such as pneumonia, or physical airway obstruction. Sputum culture should be done to test for infections caused by bacteria’s. A sputum cytology test can be done to evaluate cells of the lungs, specifically neutrophils, and eosinophils, these cells are the main two type of white blood cells that can be greatly increase with inflammation caused by asthma in some people. A lung biopsy can be done to evaluate for lung tissue damage or lung cancer. Blood can be tested for allergen sensitivity, blood gasses can be taken arterially to evaluate blood pH, carbon dioxide, and oxygen levels. A comprehensive metabolic panel (CMP) blood test may be done to evaluate patient’s organ function, and a complete blood count (CBC) test may be done to evaluate blood cell counts to investigate possibility of infection and gain information on amount of inflammation in body. Collective these procedures help properly diagnose patient’s condition.

There is a verity of treatments for asthma including quick relief medicine, such as short-acting inhaled bronchodilators, and oral corticosteroids. Long-term medicines such as long-acting beta-agonists and steroids some can be taken orally and others can be inhaled. Although these medicines are commonly used I am going to focus on homeopathic treatments and homeopathic remedies for asthma. According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary homeopathy is described and defined as “system of medical practice that treats a disease especially by the administration of minute doses of a remedy that would in larger amounts produce symptoms in healthy persons similar to those of the disease”. According to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health homeopathy which is also known as homeopathic medicine is a type alternative medicine practice that is supported by little to no
evidence to be effective for any particularly known specific condition. Although this type of medicine lacks evidence based support, they are regulated by, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Despite being regulated by the FDA, this type of medicine is not always evaluated for safety and effectiveness, because the FDA does not evaluate or require evaluation of the remedies for safety or effectiveness.

According to Hpathy common homeopathic treatments and homeopathic remedies include Ipecac (Ipecacuanha or Ip), Arsenicum (Ars), Nux vomica (Nux.v), Kali bichromicum (Kali.bi), Natrum sulphuricum (Nat.s), Antimonium tartaricum (Ant.t), and Moschus (Mosch). These common treatments and remedies are used in different asthmatic scenarios. Ipecac (Ipecacuanha), is a South African shrub, it is used when patient has a cough that is caused by the feeling of phlegm build up in chest. This cough leads to vomiting and threatens suffocation. Ipecacuanha is used to stop the vomiting and prevent suffocation. Arsenicum is diluted arsenic trioxide; it is used to resolve acute shortness of breath, feeling of suffocation when lying flat. Nux vomica is a southern Asian fruit tree, it is used to treat asthma onset caused by disturbances of the stomach. Kali bichromicum is created from potassium bichromate, it is used for overnight acute asthma attack that forces a person to sit up and lean forward in order to breathe. Natrum sulphuricum is Sulphate of Sodium-Glauber's Salt and is said to have cured asthma several times in the past. It is used for asthma onset caused by climate change. Antimonium tartaricum is created from tartrate of Potash, it is used when an abnormal cough that produces a sound of rhales or wheezing is present, these sound represent the possibility of the presence of mucous and phlegm that is hard to bring up. Moschus is an aromatic substance that is produced by a specific abdominal gland of the moschus moschiferus (musk deer), it is used when asthmatic onset is caused by emotional asthma, caused by a response to a stressor, anxiety/nervousness or
fear. There are many more common homeopathic treatments and homeopathic remedies for asthma outside of the ones previously listed, there are various for various onsets, and types of asthma.

Although Asthma is a disease that is incurable, it is manageable, and although it is manageable it still has its short-term effects and long-term effects. Short-term effects of asthma include but are not limited to shortness of breath, wheezing, use of accessory muscles to breathe, and cough which all can also turn into long term effects. Long-term effects of asthma include but are not limited to persistent cough, change in lung function, decreased ability to exercise, or do other activates that involve exertion, loss of sleep caused by appearance of asthma symptoms during the night time, trouble breathing that leads to person requiring breathing assistance using a ventilator, and death. The goal of treating asthma are prompting normal activates without symptoms of asthma appearing, controlling airway swelling and avoid substances that my trigger asthma symptoms. Homeopathic treatments and homeopathic remedies for asthma are worth giving a try after researching. Researching Homeopathic treatments and homeopathic remedies for anything you choose to remedy or treat homeopathically is important because as previously noted in this essay homeopathic medicine is supported by little to no evidence to be effective for any particularly known specific condition, also despite being regulated by the FDA, this type of medicine is not always evaluated for safety and effectiveness, because the FDA does not evaluate or require evaluation of the remedies for safety or effectiveness, and although it is said that all homeopathy remedies and treatments are highly diluted to little to no substance and therefore unlikely to cause harm, some of the homeopathic remedies can still contain a large amount of active ingredients that could cause possible drug interactions and side effects.
Although you have to do the research and pay close attention to this all homeopathic medicine is worth the time, research, and a great choice.

Works Cited


