

Breathing Problems in Children

You notice something odd about the way that your child is breathing. Perhaps she is breathing a bit faster or slower than what you feel is normal. Maybe your child's breath seems labored even though she isn't exerting herself. Is your child experiencing allergies, asthma or some other medical problem?

You should **never** try to diagnose a possible medical issue and **always** seek professional medical attention if your child appears to be experiencing a breathing emergency. Knowing the range of breathing issues in children can help alert you to potential serious medical problems.

Newborns and Breathing

Among our most fragile citizens, parents are on constant alert to potential health problems which include breathing emergencies.

According to the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP),ⁱ "Babies breathe much faster than older children and adults. A newborn's normal breathing rate is about 40 times each minute."

This faster rate can change under normal conditions:

- slowing to 20 to 40 times per minute when the baby is sleeping
- breathing fast several times, followed by a rest of less than 10 seconds, then breathing again



CHOP notes that "signs of respiratory problems may include, **but are not limited to**":

- Continuous rapid breathing of more than 60 breaths per minute
- Breathing that stops longer than 20 seconds
- Flaring (widening) nostrils
- Breathing by pulling the chest in at the ribs, below the breastbone, or above the collarbones
- Grunting or a moan or sigh when breathing out

- Persistent coughing or choking
- Bluish cast to the skin that can indicate the infant isn't getting enough oxygen

For any sign of respiratory problems like those listed above, you should consult your baby's doctor and **in cases of emergency immediately call 911.**

Older Children

As infants grow into older children, their exposure to the world increases which can be accompanied by additional risk of breathing emergencies. Some common behavior by children may create concern in parents. When a young child is upset and crying, for example, the child's breathing may be briefly interrupted but recovers quickly and without incident. The kinds of breathing difficulty signs listed above for newborns also apply to older children and may indicate other underlying medical issues like allergies and asthma.

Allergies

An allergy is "a chronic condition involving an abnormal reaction to an ordinarily harmless substance called an allergen"ⁱⁱ and are among the most common chronic conditions. A wide number and type of allergens surround us from dust and pollen to medications and common foods – some of which can cause life-threatening reactions, including breathing emergencies.

Asthma

Asthmaⁱⁱⁱ is a chronic lung disease that makes breathing difficult. A variety of symptoms may indicate the presence of asthma, such as: wheezing, tightness in the chest, coughing, rapid or irregular breathing. Your physician can diagnose the presence of asthma, prescribe therapy and advise you of how to avoid triggers that can create severe breathing problems in your child.

During breathing emergencies, the body rapidly depletes oxygen in the blood which can lead to serious injury or death in less than 15 minutes. Thanks to the R15 portable oxygen device, life-saving oxygen can be delivered by untrained bystanders to a child who is experiencing a breathing emergency. Placed in public spaces like schools and public pools, the R15 device will safely deliver 15 minutes of 100% oxygen until professional emergency medical professionals arrive on scene.

To read more articles like this one please visit
<https://rapidoxygen.com/white-papers>

ⁱ What might breathing problems indicate in a newborn? Children's Hospital of Philadelphia [online 4May19> <https://www.chop.edu/conditions-diseases/breathing-problems>

ⁱⁱ Allergy Definition, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology [online 4May19> <https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions-dictionary/allergy>

ⁱⁱⁱ Asthma Overview, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology [online 4May19> <https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/asthma>