What does a specialist offer?
The OSU Asthma Center offers a dedicated team of pulmonologists and a nurse practitioner to provide evidence-based individualized asthma and EIB care. We offer testing to diagnose EIB and can help your provider evaluate other causes of shortness of breath if you are not responding to standard treatment. Visit our website to learn more at asthma.osu.edu or friend us on Facebook (search for The OSU Asthma Center).
What are the symptoms of EIB?
Breathing symptoms can be mild or severe and commonly include:
• Wheezing
• Coughing
• Shortness of breath
• Chest tightness
• Tiredness
• Avoiding activity
• Not being able to keep up with people your age

Is there a test for EIB?
Eucapnic voluntary hyperventilation (EVH) is the recommended test for diagnosing EIB. A 10 percent drop in airflow during or immediately following the test is considered positive and indicates that you have EIB.

Does my asthma need to be under control to exercise?
If your asthma is not controlled or you are in the yellow zone of your asthma action plan at rest, you should not exercise. Exercise can make your symptoms worse. If your asthma is not controlled, follow your asthma action plan for treatment or see a provider for an evaluation. If you are experiencing severe symptoms, go to the emergency room.

Is my asthma controlled?
Your asthma is under control if you are able to go to school, work, play and sleep with minimal asthma symptoms. Other indicators include the following:
• Rescue medication ≤ 2 times per week during the day (do not count pre-med for exercise)
• Rescue medication ≤ 2 times per month during the night
• Peak flow is greater than 80 percent of your personal best reading.

What can I do to prevent EIB?
• Talk to your provider about medications for preventing EIB during exercise.
• Warm-up (break a sweat) for 5–10 minutes then rest for 5 minutes before exercise.
• If extreme temperatures or poor air quality make your symptoms worse, consider altering your environment.

If you have difficulty exercising in the cold:
• Breathe through your nose when possible during exercise. The nose warms the air before it reaches the lungs.
• Wear a scarf or mask over your nose and mouth to help warm the air.
• Consider exercising indoors.

If the air quality is poor: Consider exercising indoors or limit the length of time you exercise outdoors.

There are conditions with symptoms similar to EIB such as vocal cord dysfunction, acid reflux or heart problems. If your EVH test is negative or you are not responding to treatment, talk to your provider or ask to see a specialist.

Do I need to see a specialist?
Consider seeing a specialist if you have any of the following symptoms:
• Persistent breathing problems despite warming-up and preventive medications.
• You are unable to reach your exercise goals due to your breathing.
• You are a competitive athlete and require documentation for use of bronchodilators during competition.
• You desire formal testing or more education about EIB.