What causes a mucus buildup during jogging?

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Categories: Exercise and fitness, Impact, Netwellness

Q. Whenever I jog outside, I have difficulty breathing and develop a lot of mucus. How can I tell whether my symptoms are from allergies or asthma? How can this be treated so I can continue jogging?

A. It is possible that both conditions are contributing to your symptoms. These symptoms can be related to exercising regardless of whether you are allergic or nonallergic.

If the symptoms only occur outdoors and not when you exercise indoors then it is likely not related to exercise per se but rather to environmental exposures. Another caveat is whether it only occurs when you are exercising outdoors in cold weather; then one would have to consider cold-induced asthma.

Things to consider

Without more details about your condition, here are some likely scenarios:

- If you are allergic and are exercising outdoors when pollen or mold counts are high, then this could certainly cause the symptoms you are experiencing.
- It is also possible that your symptoms could be caused by exercising on days with poor air quality due to air pollution caused by ozone, or are running along streets with high stop-and-go traffic, resulting in exposure to particulate matter.
- In order to get a better handle on what is going on, you need to see an allergist who can perform proper allergy skin tests to determine your allergic status, which will identify potential outdoor triggers that could be causing these symptoms.

The doctor should also be able to perform proper pulmonary function tests to determine if you have asthma exacerbated by exercise or if you have a different condition referred to as exercise-induced bronchospasm.

Depending on the diagnosis, your physician will determine the most appropriate treatment which should allow you to continue to keep doing what you enjoy most, which appears to be jogging outdoors.

Tags: jogging, Jonathan Bernstein, mucus buildup, University of Cincinnati

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