

Sounds of Asthma



Ages 5-12

Activity Objective:

Knowledge of the respiratory system and the asthma process is translated into musical sounds in this fun, cooperative game. This activity allows children to use their creativity to express their understanding of what is happening with their asthma and respiratory system.

Instructions:

- Participants choose a musical instrument from an assortment of children’s musical instruments. If instruments aren’t available vocal sounds can be made or children could use art materials to create instruments (see page 16 for a few suggestions).
- If instruments are going to be created, have the participants pick from the art supplies to create their musical instrument.
- Group leader directs the participants to make sounds and rhythms that simulate the various aspects that might occur, such as:
 - Sound of air moving through an open bronchial tube.
 - The sound of wheezing when the bronchial tubes are blocked by the inflammation and mucus.
 - What would it sound like when the smooth muscle bands are fitting loosely around the bronchial tubes.
 - Create the sound when the smooth muscle bands are getting tight around the bronchial tubes.
 - What does it sound like before, during and after an asthma episode?
- Participants can join together to form an orchestra by playing their instruments together.
- *Optional:* Allowing each child to be the music director and to conduct the “orchestra” (group members) about the severity of his or her asthma. Games could also be designed where the participants could play the sounds and the group has to guess what is occurring.
- Older participants could create songs or musical arrangements. The music can be tape recorded or they could make a video. They could present their final product at an “all camp performance”.

Materials Needed:

- Children’s musical instruments (drums, bells, tambourine, flute, xylophone, guitar, sticks, etc.)

If instruments are going to be made some supplies might include:

- Beans
- Masking tape
- Toilet paper or paper towel tubes
- Bowl
- Rubberband
- Wax paper
- Bells
- Pots and pans
- Glasses filled with water to different amounts
- Sticks
- Rocks, etc.
- Tape recorder, blank tapes, video equipment, TV monitor (optional)

Homemade Musical Instrument Ideas

Cymbals

- Use two aluminum pie tins. Punch hole in center and attach yarn for handles.
- Use two cooking pot covers of similar size.

Drums

- Plastic ice cream pail, coffee can with plastic lid or oatmeal box. Use wooden utensils for drum sticks.

Bongo Drums

- Rubber band together two of the regular drums above. Beat with hands.

Guitar

- Stretch different length rubber bands over a cardboard shoe box.

Xylophone

- Take several glass water glasses and fill each with different levels of water. Try different items to clank on the glasses.

Kazoo

- Cover a comb with wax paper and hum against the wax paper comb.
- Use an empty paper towel roll and rubber band wax paper over one end. Pinch a couple holes through the wax paper to let air out and blow or hum into in the other end.

Rhythm Sticks

- Use any two like sticks such as pencils, chop stick or dowels.

Maracas

- Put small gravel, rice or beans inside a plastic container with a tight fitting lid (beverage bottle work well).
- Put rice, gravel and popcorn into three different plastic film containers and tape together.

Tambourine

- Decorate two paper plates. Place rice or popcorn between the plates and staple or tape together to contain the objects.