

Scuba Diving as Therapy for Asthma: Its Positive and Negative Implications

Asthma is a disease characterized by shortness of breath. When asthma attacks, there is inflammation and muscle spasm in the lungs which causes the airways to constrict. This chronic disease affects both children and adults.

Though there is no specific cure for asthma, certain medications help alleviate its symptoms, and proper treatment can help control the frequency of attacks. Following certain preventive measures will make things easier for a person with asthma.

There are some doctors, though, who recommend getting involved in activities that help strengthen the lungs. One such activity is swimming. Swimming has long been used as a therapy for respiratory ailments. Other forms of aquatic exercises, like scuba diving, may help, but since the diver is normally immersed in deep waters, it might present complications for the asthma sufferer. Prolonged exposure to cold water can also lead to irritation of the airways. The asthmatic diver may suffer from pulmonary barotrauma or burst lung.

Since asthma severity and trigger factors vary from case-to-case, not all asthmatic divers experience difficulty when scuba diving. There are also people whose asthma attacks stopped at a certain age. Cases like these are commonly called childhood asthma. So it is important to secure proper consultation and guidance from the doctor before plunging into any scuba diving activity.

Scuba divers who have asthma must always exercise extreme caution. If possible, they should never dive alone, or separate from their group. A dive buddy will help monitor an asthmatic diver's condition while submerged in the water. If an asthmatic diver does not feel well, he must not dive at all. It is important to know how to identify when an asthma is about to attack.

An excellent supplementary therapy for asthmatics is exercise. Yoga, aerobic training, strength training, and other forms of fitness programs will greatly help stabilize a diver's physical condition.

Several of the world's best divers and marine biologists have asthma but this has not stopped them from pursuing their missions.

A safer alternative for asthma sufferers is snorkel diving.

About the Author

Joe started his first [scuba gear](#) business in a small south Florida town in the early 70s. He describes it as the days when scuba was "Back in Black" because all the gear came in one color - black. Joe Diver carries quality BC models, wetsuits, wrist compasses, dive masks and whatever [scuba equipment](#) you need.

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