

ASTHMA



Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the airways that causes narrowing and obstruction, leading to difficulty breathing. It is characterized by reversible airway constriction and episodes of exacerbation.

Common symptoms include:

- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness
- Coughing (especially at night or early morning)

VA Ratings primarily depend on:

- Pulmonary Function Test (PFT) results (FEV-1 and FEV-1/FVC ratios)
- Frequency and severity of asthma attacks
- Type and frequency of medication required
- Frequency of medical visits for exacerbations

38 CFR § 4.97, Diagnostic Code 6602 – Asthma

100%	More than one asthma attack per week with episodes of respiratory failure, or requires daily use of systemic (oral or parenteral) high-dose corticosteroids or immuno-suppressive medications.
60%	At least monthly visits to a physician for required care of exacerbations, or Intermittent (at least three per year) courses of systemic corticosteroids.
30%	Daily use of inhalational or oral bronchodilator therapy, or Inhalational anti-inflammatory medication.
10%	Intermittent use of inhalational or oral bronchodilator therapy.
0%	If the condition does not meet the above criteria (non-compensable).

How the VA Evaluates Asthma

The VA bases its rating primarily on:

- Objective test results (PFTs)
- Treatment regimen (inhalers vs systemic steroids)
- Frequency of flare-ups and physician visits
- History of respiratory failure (if applicable)

Documentation Needed

To support an asthma claim, submit:

- Pulmonary Function Test (PFT) results
- Pulmonologist or primary care reports
- Medication list (inhalers, steroids, biologics)
- Medical records showing frequency of exacerbations
- C&P exam results

Helpful evidence includes:

- ER or urgent care visits for asthma attacks
- Documentation of missed work due to symptoms
- Records showing long-term medication use

FRUSTRATED WITH YOUR DISABILITY RATING OR DISAGREE WITH YOUR CURRENT RATING?

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