

Health Case Scenario: Jose

Since childhood, Jose has suffered from asthma. He experiences difficulty breathing as well as night time coughing spasms. Using an inhaler is second nature, as he never leaves home without it. Despite his chronic illness, Jose is determined to live an active lifestyle like his friends. He is a star basketball player for the high school team and plays for club teams during the off-season. He has been part of the starting line-up since freshman year. As a junior, he held the school record for the most three-point shots during a game. He has been MVP twice and is expecting to be elected captain his senior year. Such achievements are deserved as Jose is always practicing—either running sprints or shooting hoops—even outside of scheduled gym time. However, Jose often misses school for doctors' appointments and for visits to the emergency room.

Jose's mother also has asthma and worries about her son. Fortunately, the hospital is a short drive from their home and her work schedule allows her to take him there whenever needed. The family has established a relationship with the doctors and nurses on staff. They are always prepared to see Jose and treat his condition. Jose's family's insurance, provided by his father's employer, covers the latest inhalers and medication. His asthma, though problematic, is treatable and his health care expenses are affordable. He remains, however, at risk for severe asthma attacks that can require either extra medication or other interventions to help him breathe normally. While these severe asthma attacks are rare for Jose, they are potentially life threatening.