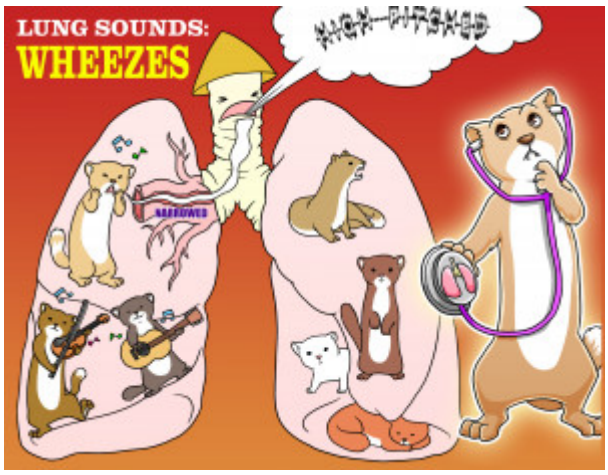
Lung Sounds - Wheezes

Wheezes are abnormal pulmonary sounds which are often heard throughout the lungs. They are high-pitched sounds that may have a musical quality. They result from air moving through narrowed airways, which can be seen for example in asthma or chronic bronchitis.



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Location

Throughout Lung
Throughout the entire Lung
This lung sound can be heard at the end of inspiration or early expiration and is present throughout the lung, typically, upon auscultation.

Description

High Pitched
High Pitched Whistle
Wheezes are described as high-pitched sounds. It is often inferred that high pitched wheezes are associated with disease of the small airways and low pitch wheezes are associated with disease of larger airways.

Sounds Like

Musical
Music
As the airway lumen becomes smaller, the air flow velocity increases resulting in harmonic vibration of the airway wall and thus the musical tonal quality.

Cause

Air Moving through Narrowed Airways
Air through Narrowed Airway
Wheezes are significant as they imply decreased airway lumen diameter, leading to air moving through narrowed airways. This can occur, for example, due to thickening of reactive airway walls in asthma, or collapse of airways due to pressure from surrounding pulmonary disease.

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