

# every breath matters

Issue 12, May 2015



**Asthma**  
Foundation SA

## 2015 Australian Masters Games

Asthma Foundation SA is delighted to be an Official Charity Partner of the 15<sup>th</sup> Australian Masters Games 2015.

The Australian Masters Games will be held in Adelaide, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of October. This is a significant and high-profile event in the national sporting calendar, involving 58 sports and attracting over 10,000 participants from overseas, interstate and locally.

With exercise being one of the leading triggers for asthma flare-ups, Asthma Foundation SA will have a presence at the Games, promoting the benefits of exercise and asthma management. We will work with the Games' organisers, the 58 individual sporting groups and

volunteers to offer information, training, support and resources.

With one in 10 Australians living with asthma and over 10,000 people participating in the Games, this means that around 1,000 participants and 200 volunteers may also be affected.

Asthma symptoms during or after exercise are one of the first indications that asthma may be poorly controlled. However, exercise-induced asthma can still occur even with well-controlled asthma.

By creating a safer environment for these participants and volunteers, as well as spectators, they will have greater

confidence to compete and enjoy themselves, while being aware that support is available if needed.

If you would like to volunteer to help Asthma Foundation SA at the event, please contact:

- Jodie: [jodie@asthmasa.org.au](mailto:jodie@asthmasa.org.au)
- Holly: [holly@asthmasa.org.au](mailto:holly@asthmasa.org.au)
- 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462)

For more information about the 15<sup>th</sup> Australian Masters Games 2015 visit [australianmastersgames.com](http://australianmastersgames.com)



## The Flu, nothing to sneeze at!

With winter now upon us, it's time to make sure your asthma is well-controlled. Colds and flu are the most common triggers for asthma flare-ups. A few tips for keeping well this winter include:

- Taking your asthma preventer medication regularly, even when you feel well
- Keep your blue asthma reliever medication on hand at all times
- Using a spacer with your puffers
- Having an influenza vaccination

- Having an up-to-date Asthma Action Plan

An Asthma Action Plan is essential for asthma management; ask your doctor for a written plan, and ensure you follow it if your asthma gets worse.

If you would like to talk with one of our Asthma Educators, please call our free 'Asthma Assist' line: 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462). Alternatively, visit [asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)



**Join the  
conversation!**



**Asthma Foundation SA**



**@AsthmaSA**

# Our impact

Working within the Northern Adelaide Medicare Local area.



Over three months, we worked with eight pharmacies, receiving 165 referrals to help people with asthma.



Over 40 GPs and Practice Nurses attended an asthma training event.



Spacer use increased from 41% to 69% post education.



Hospitalisations decreased from 22 to two in the 12 months post-education.



Patient's Asthma Scores improved from an average of 16/25 pre-education to 18/25 post-education.

## Know your Asthma Score

Is your asthma under control? Answer our five questions to find out now.

[asthmaaustralia.org.au/AsthmaScore](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au/AsthmaScore)



# Ask an Asthma Educator

I have had asthma since childhood, and I think my asthma is pretty well-controlled. Recently, I have found it harder and harder to exercise, because I feel tightness in my chest and I start coughing. I have also been waking up almost every night coughing and wheezing recently. I am starting to wonder if my asthma is getting worse.  
- Abby

Thank you for writing to us, Abby.

Exercise can be a major trigger for people with asthma, and it is important to exercise safely. Exercise-induced asthma occurs more often when asthma is not well-controlled.

A few tips to exercising safely:

- Follow your Asthma Action Plan
- Warm-up before exercise
- Use your asthma reliever medication before exercise, if prescribed
- Take asthma preventer medication regularly, if prescribed
- Carry your blue asthma reliever medication at all times
- Use a spacer with your puffer
- See your doctor regularly for an asthma review, even when you feel well
- Call our Asthma Assist line 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) to speak with our Asthma Educators

Good asthma management can enable you to exercise safely without symptoms.

Abby, you mention that you have been waking up at night with asthma symptoms. This also suggests that your asthma may not be well-controlled. You may want to check what your asthma score is:

[asthmaaustralia.org.au/asthmascore](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au/asthmascore)

I also encourage you to see your doctor as soon as possible, to discuss your asthma score and review your asthma management, so that you can live life to the fullest.

- Clara, Asthma Educator

My children both have asthma; one is in Year 2 and the other in Year 6. What do I need to know to make sure my children are safe when they go back to school after the holidays?  
- Robyn

Thank you for your email, Robyn. Back-to-school time is associated with a big rise in asthma flare-ups in school-age children. Research suggests this rise may be due to children being exposed to cold and flu viruses on returning to the classroom. A recent study found that these viruses are linked not only with serious asthma flare-ups, but also with day-to-day asthma symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, and chest tightness.

Here are a few tips to ensure that your children are well prepared for their return to school when it comes to their asthma:

- Check that your children's Asthma Care Plans are up-to-date, and discuss their plans with your doctor if there have been any changes or concerns
- Ensure that the children each have in-date asthma reliever medication and a spacer for school. These should be easily accessible at all times and kept with their care plan
- It is also very important to make sure that people with asthma take asthma preventer medication every day as prescribed, even when they feel well

Asthma Foundation SA can provide free asthma first aid training for all school staff. Please feel free to discuss any issues relating to asthma and linked conditions with an Asthma Educator by calling our Asthma Assist line 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462). We are here to assist South Australians to live well with asthma!

- Sophie, Asthma Educator

## Do you have a question?

Call 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) or email [info@asthmasa.org.au](mailto:info@asthmasa.org.au)



# Asthma First Aid Training

Asthma First Aid training is available online for school staff, sport and recreation organisations, workplaces, and health professionals. Time and distance are often impediments to accessing quality training and our e-Learning Hub provides accessible training at a time and pace that best suits your needs. Asthma SA also offers a range of face-to-face training. For further details, please contact 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) or visit [asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)



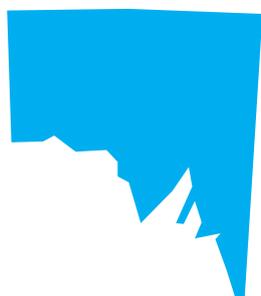
**Asthma Foundation SA members receive a 10% discount on swimming lessons at State Swim**



## State Swim

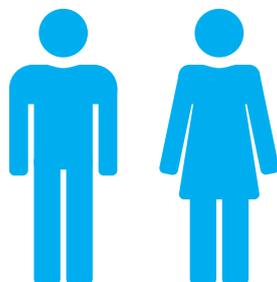
State Swim Swimming Schools SA has six swimming schools located around Adelaide, teaching around 6,000 children on a weekly basis. State Swim's swimming facilities (air and water) are heated to a comfortable temperature for comfort and well-being. The classes are small, structured and incentive-based, with children moving from class to class when the required skills are met. Children are rewarded with certificates and stickers, and the caring, skilled staff are committed to teaching your children to swim. State Swim caters for all age groups, including a varied adult program, involving lap swimming, aquarobics and learn-to-swim classes. For more information, visit State Swim's website: [stateswim.net.au](http://stateswim.net.au)

## Supporting South Australians



**Over 2,300**

Since 2012 a total of 2,375 people in regional South Australia have been reached by Asthma Foundation SA as part of the Regional Communities Breathe Better Program.



**42%**

42% of people accessing online training were from regional and rural areas.



**Over 1,000**

Over 1,000 health professionals were trained in asthma management during 2013 - 2014.



# Community Consultation

This year, Asthma Foundation SA, with the support of the Australian Executor Trustees, has started a community consultation program with priority community groups from new and emerging communities in South Australia.

Through our initial engagement with bi-cultural workers and health professionals from various organisations, we have outlined key activities that will lead to the development of culturally appropriate asthma resources.

Those identified as having the greatest need included Burmese, Afghani, and African communities. Our community consultations with these groups were facilitated by our Asthma Educators, who, with the help of interpreters, explored the groups' knowledge,



perceptions of asthma, information, and support needs.

Community members expressed a need for high-quality, culturally appropriate resources that are visual and contain minimal use of the written word.

Their valuable feedback will be considered carefully in the planning, design, and development of resources. Our mission is to empower all people living with asthma, no matter what their cultural background, to live well with asthma.

## Closing the Gap

Asthma Foundation SA is pleased to work together with Asthma Australia thanks to the generous support of the Morialta Trust to deliver the Aboriginal Communities Breathe Better Program. This initiative provides training to Aboriginal Health Workers, to ensure they have the skills and resources required to help people in their communities live well with asthma.

This year, the program will work with Aboriginal Health Services in Whyalla, Coober Pedy, and Elizabeth, focusing on supporting children living with asthma from these communities.

In addition, Asthma Foundation SA provides training to individuals undertaking their Certificate in Aboriginal Health through the Aboriginal Health Council of SA Inc. This training will equip them with the

skills they need to become a qualified Aboriginal Health Worker. One in every 10 Australians live with asthma, and those living in regional areas have significantly higher rates of asthma compared to those who live in major cities.

Current research shows that Aboriginal Australians have higher rates of asthma (16.5%, compared to 10.2%) and asthma mortality rates that are 2.5-times higher than among non-Aboriginal Australians.

We are committed to working together with our supporting partners to help Aboriginal communities live well with asthma and in doing so moving closer towards "Closing the Gap".



## 2015 Major Partners

**Santos**  
We have the energy.



Every Breath Matters Issue 13 will be released in September 2015.

## In 2013 - 2014



Nearly 800 participants from sport and recreation centres trained in asthma first aid.



40 sessions were delivered to 523 participants in workplaces.



1,173 students participated in asthma education sessions.



We received over 3,500 calls to 1800 ASTHMA Assist (1800 278 462)