



every breath matters

Issue 13, September 2015

You can control your asthma. Ask us how.

Most people with out-of-control asthma do not have to put up with it. National Asthma Week (1-7 September) is the perfect time for people with asthma to reassess how well controlled their asthma actually is.

Everyone's asthma is different and can change over time. Symptoms often vary from person to person.

How do you recognise asthma?

People with asthma can have a range of symptoms:

- Breathlessness
- Wheezing
- Tight chest
- Persistent cough
- Symptoms often occur at night, early in the morning or during/after activity

A person's asthma symptoms can vary over time – sometimes they will have no symptoms, especially when asthma is well controlled.

How do people with asthma keep safe and well?

While we still need to find out more

about what causes asthma, we do know a lot about how to live well with asthma. Most people can carry out their lives normally by following simple asthma treatments.

Arrange to see your doctor for a review of your asthma at least twice a year.

If you have asthma, see your doctor if you:

- Wake up coughing, wheezing or breathless
- Struggle to keep up with normal activity
- Use your reliever more than two days per week
- Are not sure if your medications are working
- Have had asthma symptoms in the last month or a flare-up in the last year and you are not yet on an asthma preventer medication

We can provide information and support about:

- Learning more about asthma
- How to recognise signs and symptoms of asthma

- How to use asthma medications and devices
- Managing asthma with Asthma Action Plans and Care Plans
- What to look for in an asthma friendly doctor
- What to do in an asthma emergency

We also have a shop where you can buy asthma related products like spacers at low cost.

Visit us at:

Asthma Foundation SA
300 South Road, Hilton
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Alternatively, call 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) for a chat with an Asthma Educator. You can also go online and place an order from the shop. Visit asthmaaustralia.org.au and click on 'SA' and go shopping.

Members will also receive a 10% discount on all orders.

You can control your asthma. Ask us how.



1800 ASTHMA
asthmaaustralia.org.au

Our Impact

April 2014 - March 2015



340 people referred from organisations and health professionals to the Asthma Assist team for education



6,500 written resources were distributed



817 people from sport and recreation clubs trained in Asthma First Aid



857 health professionals were trained by Asthma SA and health experts



93 Asthma or Anaphylaxis courses were delivered to 1,192 children's services staff



348 people completed training in Asthma First Aid for their workplace



2,791 school staff from 287 schools trained in Asthma First Aid

asthmaaustralia.org.au

Ask an Asthma Educator

I know that Spring is here. Every time I go to the Royal Adelaide Show I look forward to seeing all the flowers, plants, and animals, but I know only too well that it is the start of hay fever season! This is a very difficult time for me, my nose and eyes water constantly and my asthma seems to get worse. Last year I ended up in the emergency department with an asthma flare-up and I don't want this to happen again.

- Adele

Dear Adele, thank you for your email. Spring is certainly a time of year when many people with asthma experience hay fever, or allergic rhinitis. It is an allergic reaction to allergens, or triggers, that are breathed in through the nose. Symptoms occur mainly in Spring and Summer and are usually triggered by pollen from grasses, weeds and trees.

The main symptoms of hay fever are similar to those you describe:

- A blocked nose
- Watery eyes
- Sneezing
- Watery and runny nose
- Itchy nose and eyes

Hay fever can impact greatly on one's health, well-being and quality of life. The good news is that by treating hay fever effectively you can also improve your asthma symptoms and reduce asthma related emergency department visits and hospitalisations!

Here are a few tips that may help:

- For people who have hay fever and asthma, effective treatment of hay fever is important to help keep asthma under control
- Find out what triggers your hay fever and try to avoid those allergens
- Corticosteroid nasal sprays are the most effective medication for persistent hay fever or moderate to severe hay fever that occurs from time to time
- Antihistamines help to relieve a runny nose, sneezing, itching and eye symptoms, but are less effective in relieving nasal symptoms, particularly a blocked nose. Newer antihistamines are less likely to make you drowsy.

There are several treatments for people with hay fever, which you may want to discuss with your health care professional or pharmacist. Feel free to call 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) to talk to an Asthma Educator who can also help you to live well with asthma and hay fever.

- Clara, Asthma Educator

Asthma Friendly Communities Program

We are proud to be associated with Ductair with whom we have a genuine two-way relationship. Ductair is a corporate member, sponsors Asthma Foundation SA's community programs, and encourages their staff to be involved in fundraising and team building events. The end result is we are able to extend our 'asthma friendly community' initiatives and our capacity to create safer environments for children living with asthma.

To demonstrate their commitment, Ductair is actively working towards becoming an 'Asthma Friendly' workplace, giving the organisation the skills to manage an asthma flare-up (attack) should the situation arise.

Supported by

Ductair
Natural Air Filtration

Ductair's staff also participate in our annual Santos Take a Breather Charity Challenge event.

Spacers help disadvantaged children with asthma to breathe better

Asthma Foundation SA recommends that every person using asthma medication (puffer) should use a spacer. Using a spacer can make it easier for many people to use their puffer. Importantly, more medication is inhaled into the lungs where it needs to go and any potential side effects in the mouth are reduced.

Research shows that 90% of people with asthma don't use their asthma medications and devices properly. This in turn means that their asthma is not well controlled through proper use of their medications and devices.

Spacers can be used by people of all ages and can be very useful for children.

Choosing a spacer can depend on the medication type, personal preference, budget, and advice from the health care professional, including Asthma Foundation SA.

Thanks to the Committee of the Liquor Industry Charity Golf Day, we have been able to distribute spacers to children living with asthma especially those from disadvantaged communities across South Australia.



For more information contact our Asthma Educator on 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462).

Take control of your asthma – use a spacer with your puffers.

“Thank you for your donation of the many spacers. Sister Janet, Joyce and all at the Adelaide Day Care Centre are very grateful for your support.”

Regional Asthma Management Program

Through the generous support of our community partner ElectraNet, we are continuing to provide direct support to people living with asthma as well as their carers across a range of South Australian communities. Areas with the greatest needs where ElectraNet has a strong presence will be the main focus of this program over the next two years. We will provide information, training, resources, and support to health professionals who work in a variety of settings such as hospitals, pharmacies, general practice, and community health and general community settings in the target locations.

By working with local health care

professionals, we will be well positioned to develop referral pathways so that people affected by asthma can readily access an Asthma Educator. They will be provided with direct support through our 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) telephone information service. Feedback to the referring health care professional will be provided so that a consistent approach to asthma management is maintained ensuring the best possible outcomes for those living with asthma.

In addition, Asthma First Aid training will be offered across community settings such as schools, child care centres, and sports clubs. During

the next 12 months, we will focus on providing Asthma Assist Services through the ElectraNet Regional Asthma Management Program in Taillem Bend (Murray Mallee), Port Augusta (mid North) and Elizabeth (northern Adelaide).

People living in regional communities have a higher prevalence of asthma compared to people living in major cities. In partnership with ElectraNet, we will reach out to these communities and aim to empower them to improve their quality of life by providing them with accessible, affordable, and evidence based asthma related services.



**1 in 10
Australians have asthma.**



A respiratory health building block in 'Closing the Gap'

We are delighted to again partner with the CMV Group in 2015 to develop and implement a Regional Aboriginal Asthma Education and Training Program.

Following the success of the 2014 program, this initiative aims to support Aboriginal children with asthma and their families. Our team will foster relationships with Aboriginal Health Services in five regional communities by up-skilling Aboriginal Health Workers with the latest up-to-date information and guidelines about asthma management. Spacers (medication delivery devices) will also be provided to families in need who have a child living with asthma.



Thanks to the generous support of the CMV Group, Asthma Educators are able to collaborate with the Aboriginal Health Council of SA Inc. and regional Aboriginal Health Services, to plan and deliver education and training programs in Aboriginal Health Centres in Coober Pedy, Whyalla, Murray Bridge, Port

Augusta and Elizabeth. Our team has provided these organisations with a range of resources including asthma control packs and other culturally appropriate resources.

This important program supports Asthma Foundation SA's commitment

to deliver more culturally responsive Asthma Assist Services to meet the needs of Aboriginal communities and strive towards 'Closing the Gap'.

Together we are making a difference!

Supported by



Free information sessions

Live Well with Asthma

This session is designed to provide the person who has asthma, or their carer, with an update on current asthma management.

— 17 September 2015
— 13 November 2015

Duration: 1.5 hours
Time: 10am - 11:30am

Kids Live Well with Asthma

An interactive session for children to learn about their asthma together with their parents and/or carers.

— 9 October 2015
— 11 December 2015

Duration: 1.5 hours
Time: 10am - 11:30am

Live Well with Eczema

This session provides the person who has eczema, or the carers of children with eczema with an update on current management.

— 20 November 2015

Duration: 2 hours
Time: 9am - 11am

Live Well with Allergy & Anaphylaxis

This session provides the person who has allergy/anaphylaxis, or their carer, with an update on current management.

— 10 November 2015

Duration: 2 hours
Time: 10am - 12pm

Bookings via Asthma Foundation SA, free call 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462)

2015 Major Partners



Every Breath Matters Issue 14 will be released in May 2016.

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