

Living With Asthma

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In New Zealand, over 460,000 people take medication for asthma – this includes an estimated 1 in 7 children and 1 in 9 adults. For children, asthma is one of the most common causes of hospital admissions. In 2011, 69 people died from asthma in New Zealand.

Currently there is no cure for asthma, however there are lots of things you can do to manage it better so that it doesn't impact on your life too much. The first step is to learn as much as you can about the condition and the steps you can put in place to control it.

What is asthma?

People with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs. The airways may tighten, partially close up, swell inside, and make more mucus when faced with certain triggers. This makes it hard to breathe in, and even harder to breathe out.

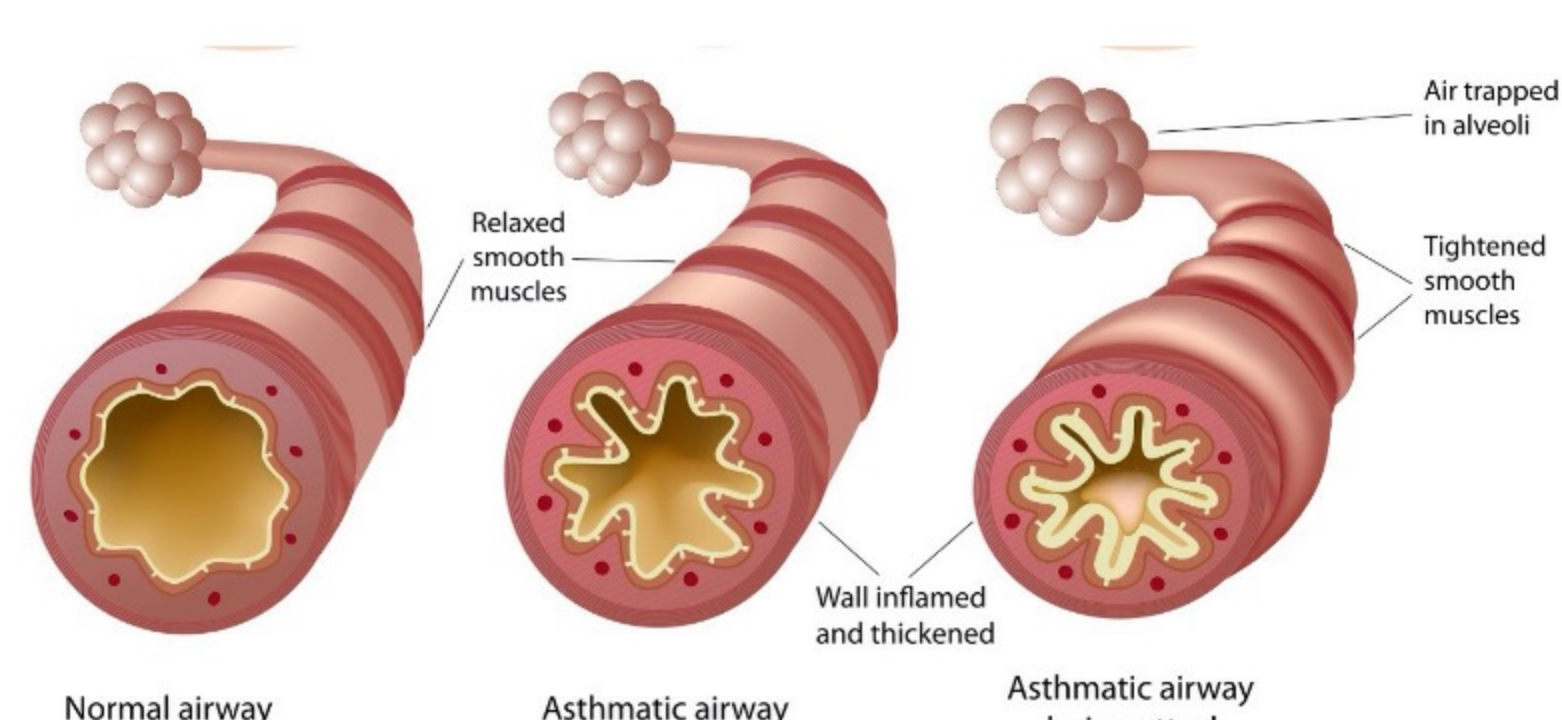


Illustration courtesy of Ophea Asthma Friendly website (CA)

What causes asthma?

Australia, and the United States, it may be related to modern living – perhaps to changes to the environment, our diet, or different exposure to some infections. It is likely that all of these things have an effect, and hopefully in the future researchers will come up with a way of preventing people from getting asthma. Although asthma cannot be cured, there may be 'good' times in your life when you think it has gone away. Most of the time, with the right information, education and attitude, you can manage your asthma so that you can go about day-to-day life without symptoms.

What are the symptoms of asthma?

If you have asthma you might sometimes feel:

- wheezy (your breath might 'whistle' in and out)
- short of breath
- tight in the chest
- you might have a cough.

You may experience one of these symptoms or a combination of them. Symptoms may occur suddenly as an 'asthma attack', or they may be with you most of the time. Often people with asthma get hay fever or eczema as well, and have a family history of these conditions. For most people, asthma is just something to be careful about. However, every year, some people do die from asthma. It is important you know exactly what to do if you have a severe attack. Your **Self Management Plan** can help you to learn what to do as your asthma improves or gets worse.

For the latest statistics on asthma in New Zealand, [click here](#).

Is your asthma under control?

[Take the asthma control test to find out](#)

USEFUL ASTHMA RESOURCES

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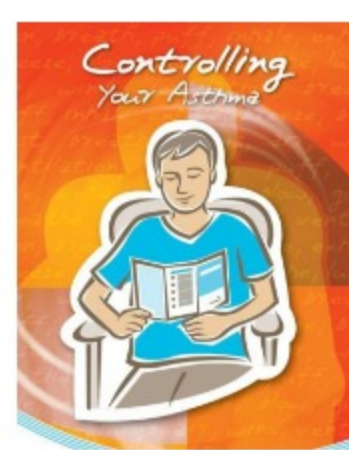
What is Asthma

An information booklet on symptoms, triggers, management strategies, medicines and steps to take in an asthma emergency.



Children and Asthma

An information booklet on symptoms, inhaler use, medicines, physical activity and asthma friendly schools.



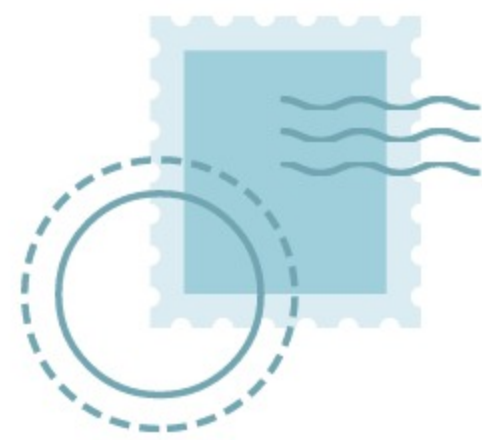
Controlling your Asthma

An information booklet with seven steps to help you learn to control your asthma and lead the life you want.



Triggers in Asthma

An information booklet to help people with asthma reduce or avoid exposure to triggers.



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