



Spring and Asthma

Whilst many of us are enjoying the recent **spring** sunshine, some people with asthma might notice an increase in wheezing and asthma symptoms. This is because spring is a time when there is an increase of pollen in the air, which is a common trigger for people with asthma.

Hay fever is a common allergic condition that affects 8% of children and adolescence, particularly in springtime. Up to 80% of people with asthma also experience hay fever. If hay fever is poorly controlled then it can be more difficult to control your asthma. For a majority of people hay fever is due to pollen, which are tiny, dust-like particles given off by certain types of trees, grasses, weeds and flowers. Pollens are small enough to be airborne and penetrate indoors and out.

Whether you are in the city or rural areas here are some tips to prevent asthma and allergy in spring:

- Always carry appropriate medication with you in case you need it (i.e. blue reliever puffer)
- Try to avoid going out on windy days or after thunderstorms
- Avoid activities in areas where grass is being mowed
- Keep windows closed at home and particularly when in the car and use recirculated air in the car when pollen levels are high
- Avoid hanging washing outside on high pollen days. The pollen sticks to your clothes.

The Asthma Foundation of Victoria website asthma.org.au offers a pollen count during the peak allergy period of October to January, from The University of Melbourne's School of Botany. This forecast can be used to alert people with hay fever and people with asthma of the likelihood of being exposed to high levels of pollen, enabling them to take preventative measures in danger periods.

If you would like more information or would like to speak to an Asthma Advisor, please call 1800 645 130 or visit www.asthma.org.au or www.asthmafriendlyschools.org.au