

I'M BREATHING MY BEST THIS SPRING

asthma.org.au/spring-asthma



Spring is a time to get out and enjoy the warm weather. It's also a time when there are many common triggers that can bring on asthma and hay fever symptoms. Our ability to breathe freely has a huge impact on our wellbeing. Follow these simple steps to breathe your best and get the most out of spring. Be sure to always talk to a health professional before making any health decisions.

FIVE STEPS TO BREATHE YOUR BEST THIS SPRING

1 Protect your airways from allergies (hay fever)

If you're like 80% of people with asthma, you will be affected by both hay fever (allergic rhinitis) and asthma. This allergic reaction can make asthma worse - it's double trouble for your breathing. Protecting your airways from hay fever is a vital step to good asthma control and breathing your best this spring.

Treating hay fever depends on severity and frequency of symptoms, options include:

- Saline sprays/irrigations,
- Antihistamines
- Corticosteroid nasal sprays
- Decongestants,
- Allergen Immunotherapy (find out more on our website)

2 Asthma under control

Asthma is complex and different for everyone, but no one knows your body better than you. Start the season off with an Asthma Review and get a written [Asthma Action Plan](#).

What to do:

- Book a telehealth or in person consult with a GP for an asthma check up (review).
- Consider last year's spring season, how was your asthma and allergies during this time?
 - How often did you experience asthma symptoms? You can see what your control is now by completing a short [Asthma Control Test](#)
 - Did you experience a lot of allergy symptoms?
 - How much did your asthma and allergies impact your daily life, including sleep?

In the appointment, be sure to discuss this with your doctor and any challenges you face getting your asthma and allergies under control.

3 Cheaper medication options

Springtime can be an expensive time for individuals and families who face the challenge of managing their asthma and hay fever. In Australia, there may be cheaper and equally effective medicines for your hay fever and asthma management and sometimes it's just about asking the question.

Here's a recommended approach:

"Dr <Smith>, we (I) find spring season quite an expensive season when trying to get on top of our (my) hay fever. Are there cheaper or more economical medicines available for me that do the same job?"

We strongly encourage you to speak with a pharmacist and your doctor about treatment options that will work for you, your family needs and your budget.

4 Get connected with local pollen counts

If pollen is a trigger for your asthma, it's helpful to know where to find your local information on seasonal pollen counts. There are many types of pollens that cause allergies, however, these vary across the country.

We recommend downloading AirRater App available at airrater.org and Pollen Forecast pollenforecast.com.au.

On high pollen days, close your windows and doors. If you have an air conditioner, make sure it is turned to 'recirculate' so it doesn't bring the outdoor pollens inside.

For people living in southern parts of New South Wales, Canberra and Victoria, Thunderstorm Asthma season starts from 1 October. Visit our [website](#) for more information.

5 Learn the steps of Asthma First Aid

The Asthma First Aid app is your go-to tool for an asthma emergency. It covers both first aid in the event of an asthma emergency plus the ability to review and practice each of the four first aid steps so you're an expert when you need to be.

Download the Asthma First Aid app from the App Store or Google Play.

If you have any extra questions, you can always call us on 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) and speak with an Asthma Educator or visit asthma.org.au/spring-asthma