

# Your Asthma Australia Newsletter

#### **SPRING 2022**

## DEEP BREATHING AND EXERCISE HELPS <u>MANAGE MY ASTHMA</u>

# Active exercise with deep breathing, has worked well for Judy Jensen, as part of her asthma management plan.

Along with her preventer and reliever, exercise is now a pleasant part of Judy's lung care. It gives her the vitality to do volunteer work and chase after her grandson. Her favourite activities are swimming, Pilates, walking and 'Wu Tao.'



Judy Jensen with her grandson

"It wasn't until I was an adult in my 30s and 40s that I started getting more chest infections. I used to get one every winter, but I was getting progressively more. So, I was sent off to a specialist who questioned if it was asthma or bronchiectasis. That is how they found out that it was asthma."

Since then, with support from her doctor and specialists, along with more exercise, Judy's health has improved, and her use of asthma medicines has also reduced. At her check-ups her doctor can now support her asthma management plan without the help of a specialist.

Judy's success shows how exercise and breathing techniques can work with her asthma care. Her improved breathing has in turn led to less doctor visits. Having better breathing has allowed Judy to live well with asthma.

"It wasn't until I was an adult in my 30s and 40s that I started getting more chest infections."

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To help Australians with asthma and to support Asthma Australia's life saving research, please donate now at <u>asthma.org.au</u>



#### IT'S TIME TO BEAT ASTHMA

Thank you for your support of Asthma Australia and our vital work for people living with asthma.

With your help we have been able to launch a pilot of our AirSmart public education campaign, which puts information about the air you breathe directly into the palm of your hand through the AirSmart app.

Treating asthma and preventing flare-ups in Australia has come a long way due largely to advances in research, treatment and technology. However, progress in reducing the burden of this disease has plateaued.

This year we have launched our new strategic plan. As the only consumer peak body for people with asthma, Asthma Australia is well positioned to lead the work of creating change and driving significant progress.

We will continue to champion the needs of people with asthma, and we hope that you will continue to partner with us.

Michele

Michele Goldman Chief Executive Officer

# **PROTECT YOURSELF FROM POLLEN**

It's spring. Do you have itchy or watery eyes, itchy throat, runny nose and sneezing from pollen? You might be one of the many Australians living with asthma who have hay fever. If you have asthma, exposure to pollen can make your symptoms worse.

The best approach to managing and preventing asthma symptoms during spring is to ensure appropriate use of asthma medicines. If prescribed asthma preventer medicines, they need to be taken daily for around two to three weeks before they are effective at preventing symptoms and reducing sensitivity to triggers like pollen. If you aren't using yours, the time to start is now.



# SPOTLIGHT ON A <u>FUNDRAISER</u>: NATALIE COALL & NATHAN SYMONDS

In 2020, 417 people lost their lives to asthma. Natalie & Nathan also had to face this heart-breaking loss. Their 14-year-old daughter Savanna was one of the 417 people who tragically lost their lives from an asthma attack.



Natalie and Savanna

Natalie and Nathan undertook a fundraiser for Asthma Australia in memory of Savanna. Running a fundraiser in memory of a loved one is a precious and thoughtful tribute and with the help of loving friends, family and businesses they raised over \$13,000. An amazing result with vital funds having a significant impact on ensuring ongoing support of people with asthma.

Our ultimate vision is a world without asthma, a world where a young life like Savanna's is not cut short because she couldn't breathe. Caring and wonderful supporters like Natalie and Nathan make a real difference. Their hard work in a time of tragic loss is a credit to them and their families.



If you would like to fundraise for Asthma Australia, please visit <u>fundraise.asthma.org.au</u> or email <u>fundraise@asthma.org.au</u> to find out more.



#### **REDUCING KIDS ASTHMA HOSPITALISATIONS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

#### **National Asthma Research Program highlight**

Dr Ryan Mackle MB BCh BAO Sydney Children's Hospital

In NSW alone, more than 10,000 children visit the emergency department each year for their asthma. These presentations can be greatly reduced with asthma education and care plans. However, access to paediatric respiratory specialists can be limited to metropolitan areas so vulnerable rural children may be missing out on the same level of care.

We are funding a research project to test a patient-centred model of care for children with asthma in rural areas. It will use familiar digital technologies such as the Web, Email, Zoom and Facetime to connect the children with asthma and their families to the appropriate specialists.

It will be tested in rural hospitals with children aged 5-16 who have had previous emergency department presentations or hospitalisations for asthma.

This project aims to improve knowledge of asthma, empower parents and children to self-manage asthma, and increase adherence to asthma medication. leading to a reduction in hospitalisations.



Dr Ryan Mackle мв всь вло

#### **HOST A FUNDRAISER TO HELP CREATE A COMMUNITY FREE OF ASTHMA**

Host a morning tea in September to raise vital funds to help Australians to live well with asthma. Share morning tea with work mates, friends or the local community.



A morning tea not your thing? You can fundraise your way. Join an organised race, challenge yourself to give up coffee or alcohol for a month or swim laps in the pool. The choice is all yours.

Show your community support and signup for free at fundraise. asthma.org.au/host-your-ownfundraiser. You can setup your own online fundraising page to tell your story and to share with friends and relatives. Your support will have an impact on the lives of Australians with asthma.

Remember to share with us the photos of your big day so we can share the love on social media.

#### **ASTHMA WEEK** 1 – 7 September

Asthma week is celebrated 1 -7 September each year. Show your support and host a morning tea in September to raise vital funds to help Australians to live well with Asthma.



# **LEAVE YOUR** LASTING LEGACY

Asthma Australia's purpose is to help people breathe better so they can live freely.

If you share our vision, please consider including a gift to Asthma Australia in your Will.

By including a gift in your Will to Asthma Australia, you enable the work of improving the prevention and treatment of asthma to continue. And of one day helping to find a cure.

If you are interested in finding out more about gifts in Wills, please contact Dinidu Illangakoon at dillangakoon@ asthma.org.au or 02 9018 0505 for a confidential discussion and an opportunity to write your Will for free with our partner Bare at bare.com.au/ charities/asthma-australia



A dedication to weight training, along with a healthy diet and sensible living, has helped a New South Wales man dramatically counteract some of the lesser-known side effects of living life with serious asthma – particularly long-term oral corticosteroid use.

#### **BODYBUILDING <u>REDUCES SIDE EFFECTS</u> OF "LIFE WITH ASTHMA" AND LEADS TO FITNESS CAREER**

Mark Mathers, at 55, has built a career as a Fitness Instructor and Assistant Gym Manager, and he encourages others with asthma to remain disciplined and positive to help manage their own health conditions.

It was his doctor who first suggested he attend a gym to try to rectify his physical problems, a strategy that worked wonders for Mark under the guidance of then gym owner and trainer Ian Riley, an Australian champion body builder.

The weight training has been a key to maintaining the best possible level of health. Mark's specialist still prescribes oral corticosteroids as a vital element of his overall asthma plan, but his bone density readings have not deteriorated further for the past two decades.

"I guess you learn to live with it over time, you know your limitations, what your body can and can't do, and you know your triggers, and it's learning to manage that."

"You can still exercise when you've got asthma, but you might think, 'Well, this week, I might take a couple of days off, or slow down my exercise routine just enough to keep me on track'. Even that small little thing is a win."

# YES! I'LL HELP SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA

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