

World Asthma Day: May 7

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a long-term lung condition.

People with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs which react to triggers, causing a 'flare-up'. In a flare-up, the muscles around the airway squeeze tight, the airways swell and become narrow and there is more mucus. These things make it harder to breathe.

[Video about asthma](#) from Asthma Australia.

An asthma flare-up can come on slowly (over hours, days or even weeks) or very quickly (over minutes). A sudden or severe asthma flare-up is sometimes called an asthma attack.

Asthma can start at any age

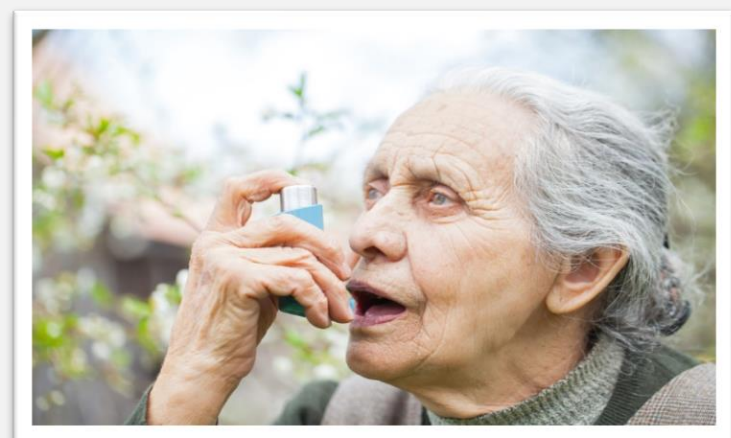
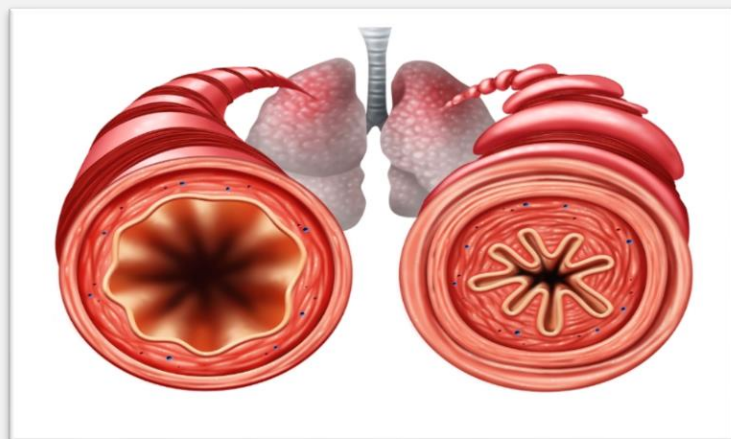
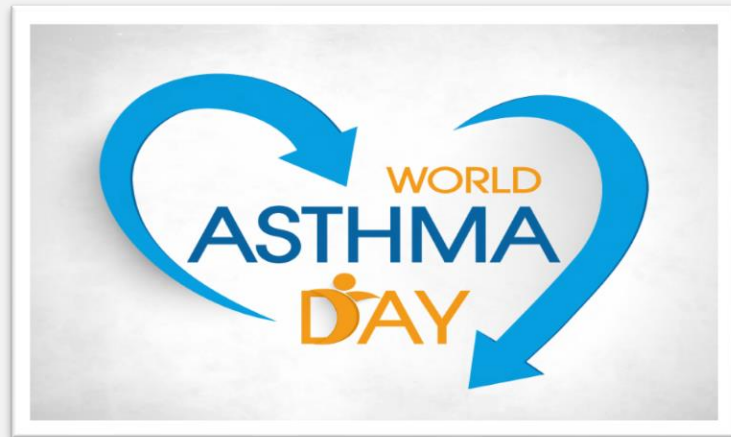
One in nine people in Australia has asthma. It affects people of all ages. Some people get asthma when they are young; others when they are older.

Asthma cannot be cured, but for most people it can be well controlled by following a daily management plan.

What are the symptoms of asthma?

A person's asthma symptoms can vary over time – sometimes they will have no symptoms, especially when their asthma is well-controlled. Symptoms often vary from person to person, but they are most commonly:

- breathlessness
- wheezing
- tight feeling in the chest
- continuing cough



Symptoms often occur at night, early in the morning or during/just after activity. They are caused by the narrowing of the airways.

If your asthma is well controlled, you should only have occasional asthma symptoms.

If you have symptoms regularly, you should see your doctor.



Asthma causes, symptoms & triggers

Asthma

Symptoms

- Labored breathing
- Wheezing
- Sleep problems
- Chest pain
- Frequent coughing
- Allergies
- Common cold
- Feel tired

Causes and triggers

- Pollution
- Smoking
- Household chemicals
- Genetic
- Fatty food
- Dust
- Pets
- Bacteria and viruses

The infographic features a central illustration of a young boy in a green shirt using an inhaler. To the left of the title are three red starburst icons. The symptoms and causes are each accompanied by a small circular icon: a person coughing, a person sneezing, a person sleeping, a person holding their chest, a person coughing, a person sneezing, a person with a cold, a person looking tired, a factory, a cigarette, medicine bottles, a DNA helix, a plate of food, a pile of dust, a cat, and a cluster of green bacteria/viruses.

Resources:

www.asthmaaustralia.org.au