

EXERCISE & ASTHMA

Asthma is a condition that affects a large portion of the Australian population. Currently over 2 million people suffer from asthma. Even though the highest prevalence of asthma is in children in the first decade of life, that is 0—10 years, it is a general misconception that asthma only affects young people.

Statistics show that 1 in 7 primary school aged children are affected and 1 in 9 adults also suffer from asthma. Asthma is characterised by an inflammation and over sensitivity of the airways which may limit airflow during day-to-day activities and exercise. People with asthma typically suffer from attacks, or exacerbations, particularly at night or early morning in which they may experience wheezing, chest tightness, breathlessness and coughing. Respiratory infections, cold weather or changes in climate, cigarette smoke, pollens, food additives and exercise are only a few triggers that may induce asthma symptoms. Symptoms and triggers vary from person to person; therefore an individualised treatment intervention is vital.

Some people only present symptoms after exercise; termed 'Exercise Induced Bronchoconstriction' or 'Exercise Induced Asthma'. In this case, the GP may administer an inhaler medication and the individual may be advised to take this 30 minutes prior to the beginning of an exercise session. Current literature has also proposed several recommendations for those who suffer from both asthma and exercise induced asthma, including:

- Aim to exercise 3—5 times per week, with each session lasting between 20—60 minutes in duration.
- Prolonged warm up is important in reducing the tendency to develop exercise induced asthma. Ensure the warm up lasts a minimum of 10 minutes.
- Aerobic Training: Start at a low level intensity. This should gradually increase as your fitness levels improve. Be sure to utilise large muscle groups of the body.
- Resistance training: There are no restrictions as to what can be performed, however, it is suggested that exercises involving large muscle groups are best. Eg: Squat or lunge.
- Cool down: Can involve repeating the mode performed in the warm up. This is then followed by flexibility and stretching exercises at the conclusion.

For more information on Asthma and the benefits of exercise be sure to visit the Asthma Australia website www.asthmaaustralia.org.au.

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Entries close 26 July 2015

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Circle the correct answer then place your completed quiz in the
Suggestion Box by 26 July 2015

An estimated 500,000 people suffer from Asthma in Australia

True / False

Asthma is characterised by chronic inflammation & oversensitivity of the airways

True / False

Asthma sufferers should never do resistance training

True / False

A long warm up of approximately 10 minutes is recommended for asthma sufferers

True / False

Asthma brought on by exercise is known as 'Exercise Reduced Asthma'

True / False

FULL NAME: _____

TELEPHONE _____