

## Asthma Fact Or Myth?

There have been a lot of myths bandied around about asthma with claims that it "can be cured" by some unscrupulous operators who are hell bent on peddling their wares, a non asthma fact. In this article, I will present some of the facts about asthma and it's symptoms.

### Did You Know?

There is no cure for asthma at this time however, management of the disease has progressed in leaps and bounds. Up until 60 years ago, there was very little known about this disease and it's cause and diagnosis was haphazard. With continued research and knowledge, it's management has improved significantly and the number of deaths have been reduced to a minimum.

### What Causes Asthma?

It's an asthma fact that people with sensitive airways in their lungs who are exposed to certain triggers such as pollen, smoke and dust mites are prone to attacks. Their airways, when exposed to these triggers will narrow, leading to difficulty in breathing. I remember only too well as a child growing up in a sport-minded community in Australia during the 1960's my first encounter with asthma. Several children in our school would invariably have to sit out certain sporting events and on one particular occasion, one child experienced a severe attack which almost led to her death. That was then; today, while the ever present danger still exists for nearly 10 per cent of the population, better management techniques have reduced the instance of such attacks.

During the last 10 to 15 years, a strong correlation between allergy and asthma has been established. The introduction of longer lasting drugs coupled with the education in avoiding triggers has been another step forward in reducing the incidence of attack for many sufferers.

### Children And Asthma

So do children outgrow asthma? This is an often asked question. While the incidence of attack will decrease for most children during their high school years and in some cases, no longer appear to get symptoms, the simple fact is, it can still ever present. The symptoms may re-surface during their adult years however, being older and more vigilant in recognizing symptoms will often give the assumption that they are rid of the disease. But in reality, being adults, and with the education they have received over the years, people are more aware of the triggers and generally avoid them. This is an asthma fact that will please educators who put in place programs to help sufferers manage their condition.

### Sport Is A No No?

Again, another area often misunderstood. In the case I mentioned earlier of the young girl who almost succumbed to the disease, she was a champion athlete who dominated her age groups in athletics during her school years. That was during the 1960's when knowledge and maintenance programs were still in their infancy. It's an asthma fact that exercise is vitally important and many sufferers lead very active sporting lives. Today, asthmatics in the main, understand the dangers present and adjust accordingly. It shouldn't prevent you from being an active participant in sport. If taking up a new activity, examine the possibilities of certain triggers being present. In a team sport environment, let your coach know as well as your teammates and talk to your doctor about the frugalities of taking up any activity, and more importantly, whether you have your condition under control.

Good management practice and being aware of what triggers to avoid is an asthma fact that is a constant in controlling and living with the instance of this disease for many sufferers.

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### About the Author

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