

Bushfires and People with Asthma



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Tips to minimise the effects of bushfire smoke:

- Smoke and increased air pollution from fires can cause people with asthma to experience symptoms such as **wheezing, coughing, chest tightness or shortness of breath.**
- Children, the elderly, and people with breathing problems including asthma, are the first to feel the effects of smoke and particle pollution and they need to take extra care.
- If you have asthma, or if you are responsible for a child or elderly person with asthma, be aware of the risk and be prepared.
- Symptoms can occur for several days after smoke is inhaled, so people with existing lung conditions such as asthma need to be vigilant with their management.
- Always follow your personal written Asthma Action Plan if available.
- Inform others around you that you experience asthma.
- Make sure you have access to blue reliever medication and continue to use your preventer medication as well.
- When smoke is in the air, but a fire is not directly threatening you, stay indoors and close all windows and doors.
- Avoid doing physical activity outdoors.
- If you develop symptoms such as coughing or wheezing, chest tightness or shortness of breath, seek medical assistance immediately.
- If your reliever medication isn't reducing your asthma symptoms, start Asthma First Aid (see next page) and seek medical attention without delay.

For further information talk to your doctor, or contact The Asthma Foundation of SA on **1800 645 130** or **www.asthmasa.org.au**

Asthma First Aid

- 1 Sit the person upright –**
be calm and reassuring,
do not leave them alone.



- 2 Without delay give 4 separate puffs of a blue reliever puffer.**

The medication is best given one puff at a time via a spacer device. Ask the person to take 4 breaths from the spacer after each puff of medication.



- 3 Wait 4 minutes.**



- 4 If there is little or no improvement, repeat steps 2 and 3.**

If there is still no improvement, call an ambulance immediately, DIAL 000.

Continuously repeat steps 2 and 3 while waiting for the ambulance.



If the person's condition suddenly deteriorates or you are concerned at any time call an ambulance immediately.