

**What's In Your Bed?**  
The truth about dust mites will shock you

**Clean With Steam**  
A healthy cleaning choice for home

**Protect Your Family**  
Create an allergy friendly space

**MEDIA PLANET**

No. 2 / April 2013

# ASTHMA & ALLERGIES

3

TIPS

TO PREVENT AN  
ASTHMA ATTACK



## BREATHE EASY

**Prepare and Prevent:** A comprehensive guide for living a happy, healthy life with asthma, allergies and respiratory conditions

**COPD & Lung Health**  
A deeper look at respiratory health problems in Australia



**Prevent Asthma**  
The importance of spacers & nebulisers for an asthmatic



## Asthma & allergy symptom relief – naturally!



Salin Plus is an evolutionary medical device that works while you sleep, to cleanse your airways with therapeutic salt ions. The result, less congestion, coughing, snoring and a better quality night's sleep. Wake up refreshed with Salin Plus. **Health fund rebates available.**

Order your Salin Plus device **online** before the 6th of May with coupon code "ASTHMA", and receive a special 15% discount and a spare filter cartridge valued at \$54.95, absolutely free. Promo price \$186.96, total savings \$87.95.

For more info visit [Salinplus.com](http://Salinplus.com) or free call 1800 011 653. Also available from Friendlies Chemists, Pharmacy 777 and select stores.

**60 Day 100%**  
Customer satisfaction guarantee!

**SALIN plus™**  
salt vaporiser and air purifier

Always read the label. If symptoms persist consult your health professional. Distributed by Lion Healthcare, ABN 40154176155.

## CHALLENGES

## What Is Asthma?

Asthma is a disease of the airways – the small tubes which carry air in and out of the lungs. Approximately two million Australians have asthma and it is estimated that it causes around 400 deaths a year in Australia alone. However, with good management, people with asthma can live active lives.

**W**hen exposed to certain asthma triggers such as cold air, exercise, pollen, and viruses, the sensitive airways react. They can become red and swollen which causes the airway muscles to tighten and produce excess mucus (phlegm). This makes the airways narrow and difficult for a person to breathe.

Common asthma symptoms include:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing
- coughing
- a feeling of tightness in the chest

Asthma is a manageable health condition. Although at the moment there is no cure, with good asthma management and education, people with asthma can lead normal, active lives.

#### What role does allergy play in your asthma?

If you have asthma that is triggered by allergens, you may have asthma symptoms when you:

- vacuum or dust, as this causes house dust mite allergens to become airborne
- visit a house where a pet lives
- are outdoors in late spring and early summer, and when there are high levels of pollen in the air
- are exposed to mould.

It can also be triggered by workplace-related allergens such as flour and grain dust, latex, and animal allergen such as urine, dander.



For more helpful information about asthma, view the new online brochures at [www.nationalasthma.org.au](http://www.nationalasthma.org.au) or call 1800 032 495.

Because of this close link between asthma and allergy, it can be more difficult to manage your asthma if your allergies are not managed well also.

However, unlike other asthma triggers such as colds and flu, it might be possible to avoid or reduce your exposure to some allergen triggers of your asthma.

Your doctor, nurse practitioner or pharma-

cist can help work out if allergy plays a role in your asthma.

For more helpful information about asthma, view the new online brochures at [www.nationalasthma.org.au](http://www.nationalasthma.org.au) or call 1800 032 495.

**NATIONAL ASTHMA COUNCIL AUSTRALIA**

[www.nationalasthma.org.au](http://www.nationalasthma.org.au)



## WE RECOMMEND



**What's In Your Bed**  
We take a deeper look at what is living inside the mattresses of many Australians.

PAGE 5

“Many allergy and asthma sufferers are unaware that one of the biggest triggers of their symptoms can be found in high traffic areas around the home, especially prevalent in beds and mattresses”

## MEDIA PLANET

We make our readers succeed!

ASTHMA AND ALLERGIES  
1ST EDITION, APRIL 2013

**Managing Director:** Gustav Aspegren  
**Email:** [gustav.aspegren@mediaplanet.com](mailto:gustav.aspegren@mediaplanet.com)

Responsible for this issue

**Project Manager:** Elana McIntyre

**Phone:** 02 9238 2051

**Email:** [elana.mcintyre@mediaplanet.com](mailto:elana.mcintyre@mediaplanet.com)

**Contributors:** National Asthma Council Australia, Jasmin Leete, Mischa Watts, Nikki Wallman, Leigh Livingstone, Lung Foundation Australia

**Photos:** All photos courtesy of Shutterstock.com unless noted otherwise

**Distributed with:** The West Australian

**Mediaplanet contact information:**  
**Phone:** 02 9238 2088

# Inside Information To Help You Attack Asthma

**T**hat's the message from Australia's peak asthma body, the National Asthma Council Australia. And to make sure the two million plus Australians with asthma have access to the most up to date information to help them recognise their triggers and manage their asthma, the Council is constantly releasing new information and free resources on its website: [www.nationalasthma.com.au](http://www.nationalasthma.com.au)

That means credible advice is literally at your fingertips, including a range of new information brochures which were launched by Australia's Health Minister, Tanya Plibersek, last month. According to Minister Plibersek most Australians know someone affected by asthma. “Asthma is extremely common and can be devastating,” Minister Plibersek

#### DID YOU KNOW?

It is thought that up to half of people over 55 with asthma have not been diagnosed

said. “We can't cure it, but we can help people better control the disease. By understanding your asthma and staying up to date with the

latest management advice, you can reduce its severity and avoid unnecessary flare ups.

#### Education In Australia

“Australia is a world-leader in asthma education, research and treatment. We were the first country to have national treatment guidelines and have funded resources to educate health professionals and help sufferers live with the disease.

“I congratulate the National Asthma Council Australia on continuing this tradition, and I urge anyone with asthma to take advantage of the resources.”

The downloadable library includes information on: Asthma & Allergy; Asthma & Wheezing in the First Years of Life; Asthma & Complementary Therapies; and Asthma & Lung Function Tests.

You can also access the National Asthma

Council Australia's popular Asthma Buddy app via a link on the home page of the website. The free app gives you instant access to your personal asthma action plan containing your doctor's instructions and information on the medications you have been prescribed including dosage details as well as step-by-step information on how to handle an asthma emergency, a direct dial link to 000 and space to add your next of kin's contact details.

Asthma action plans, which are prepared in consultation with your doctor, contain written instructions to help people with asthma – as well as their family, carers and neighbours – recognise if asthma symptoms are getting worse and indicating what action to take.

**NATIONAL ASTHMA COUNCIL AUSTRALIA**  
[www.nationalasthma.org.au](http://www.nationalasthma.org.au)

INSIGHT

**TIP**  
**1**

**CHILDREN AND ADULTS SHOULD USE A SPACER TO CORRECTLY AND EFFECTIVELY ADMINISTER MEDICATION**

One simple piece of equipment increases the amount of medication that reaches your airways and reduces asthma attacks. Yet many asthma sufferers aren't using it. So what is a spacer, and how can it help?

# Put some space between you and asthma

**The problem**

One in ten Australians have asthma, and around 400 die from asthma each year. Yet, according to Asthma Australia, up to 90% of people are not using their devices correctly.

What does this mean? "Most of the medication is hitting the back of their throat," says Jane Peachey, business development manager at WyMedical. "Which means they aren't getting the right dose of medication, and they may be at risk of an asthma attack."

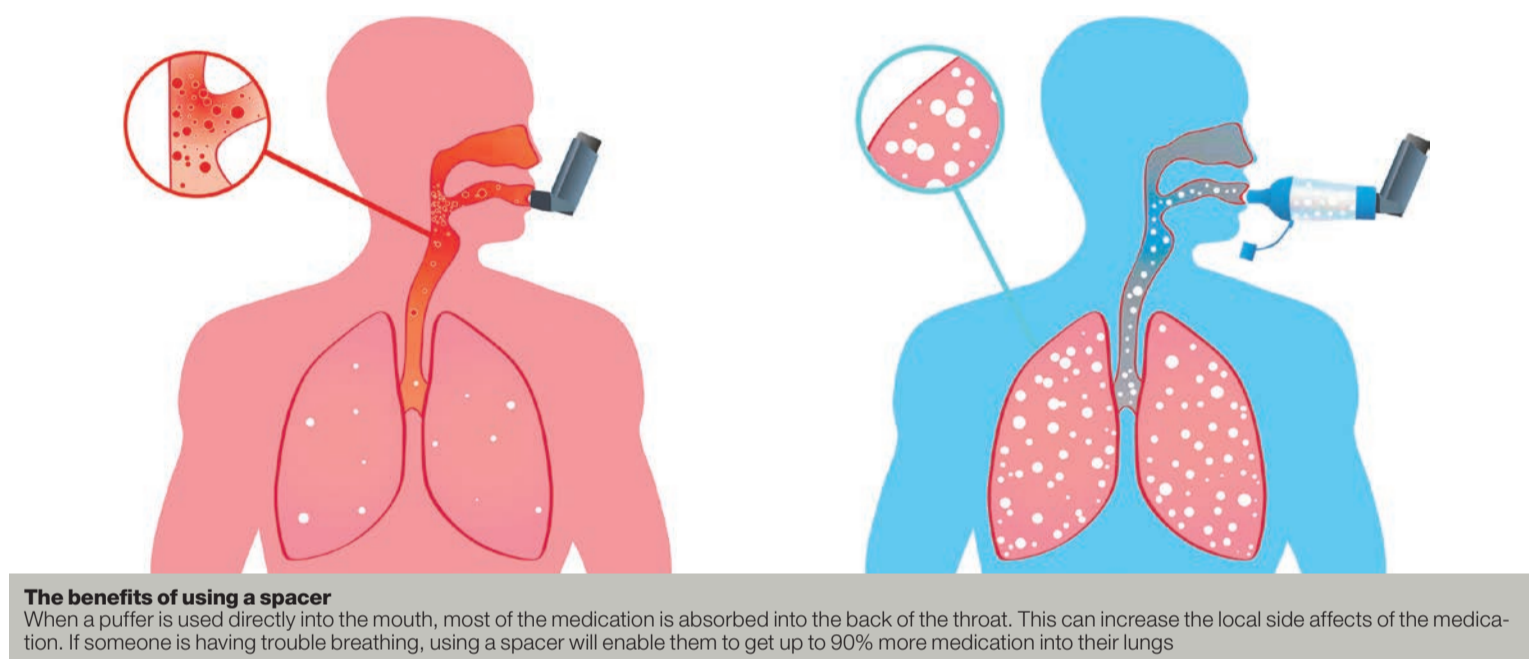
**What is a spacer?**

A spacer is a 'holding chamber' device into which you insert your puffer into, which "allows medication to be trapped in that space once it is released from the puffer - hence the name, spacer," explains WyMedical's National Sales Manager Peter Bavistock.

Most people breathe too hard and too fast on their puffer, particularly if they are anxious. By trapping the medication in the chamber, a spacer "allows the patient time to breathe in a controlled manner, and inhale the medication to produce maximum benefit."

Using a spacer delivers up to 90% more medication into the lungs, which "is going to make you feel better, faster," says Peachey. Some models even include a 'coaching' whistle, "so it is encouraging people to breathe deep and slowly," she adds.

Spacers vary in size and cost, but are available for around \$20 and can be small enough to



**The benefits of using a spacer**

When a puffer is used directly into the mouth, most of the medication is absorbed into the back of the throat. This can increase the local side effects of the medication. If someone is having trouble breathing, using a spacer will enable them to get up to 90% more medication into their lungs

fit in your pocket. They're portable and simple to use - Five minute asthma checks are being offered by some W.A. pharmacies who can advise if a person's asthma is being managed and offer advice on how to use a spacer. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

**Who should be using a spacer?**

The Asthma Foundation recommends anyone using a puffer to take asthma medication should always use a spacer. Yet currently, only around half of asthma patients using a reliever medication use a spacer. Their doc-

tor or pharmacist might not have mentioned it to them; or they may not have seen a doctor for a long time, therefore not keeping up-to-date with the best methods of managing their asthma, says Bavistock.

When people use a spacer, he says, "not only do they feel better, not only are they controlling their medication in a much better way, but they are then feeling more confident and positive in their daily lives."

Increasing awareness of how to best manage asthma from all corners - patient, doctor and pharmacy - is crucial, says

Bavistock. "Too many people die from asthma, and it is a preventable thing."

**Time for an asthma check?**

Have a chat to your pharmacist, or visit your local Friendlies pharmacy for free 5 minute asthma check-up.



**NIKKI WALLMAN**  
editorial@mediaplanet.com

Why do I need a spacer? Scan here to find out more information



## Australia's largest range of asthma products



Turboforte™ Mucus Clearance **\$79**

Airzone™ Peak Flow Meter **\$19.95**



Able Spacer™ **\$19.95**



Nebuliser Kits **\$14.95**



**NEW**  
Actineb Mini Nebuliser **\$139**

## NEWS

# Prevention In The Home

On a global scale, Australia has some of the highest rates of Asthma in the world. When we look at the link between asthma and allergies, it is evident that prevention is truly the best solution for the two million Australians suffering from asthma. With many allergy triggers found in Australian homes, prevention at home can make a world of difference in reducing flare ups.

Over 2 million people in Australia are living with asthma - that is about one in ten adults and one in nine or ten children. With such a high number of people dealing with this respiratory condition, we need to find a solution. Incredibly, fifty three percent of people do not even believe asthma is a chronic condition requiring ongoing treatment and prevention, according to an online survey conducted for GlaxoSmithKline in 2012. It is obvious that changes need to be made in the way we are looking at this extremely common health issue.

Many people take being able to breathe comfortably for granted, but asthma sufferers are all too aware of how hard it can be in their day-to-day lives. Trouble breathing and burning lungs add up to inconvenient days off work or school, frequent trips to the doctor and in the worst cases, hospital stays. In Australia, asthma is one of the leading causes for time off school and hospitalisations in children. As winter time approaches, now is the time for sufferers to get serious about prevention. It is important for sufferers of all ages to have not only an action plan, but to take preventative measures to reduce the risk of an asthma attack.

Superficial knowledge puts the focus firmly on 'fire fighting' attacks, providing relief and treating symptoms at the time they occur. However, it is wise to tackle ways to prevent what causes an attack, this can only be done by identifying personal triggers.



## Know your triggers

Some triggers are obvious, dusty bookshelves and shaggy carpets can bring on an asthma attack. When the winter sets in, adults in particular become prone to influenza-induced episodes that can leave them more susceptible to hospital stays. Many people

are unaware of the triggers to be particularly wary of, as they are less obvious; cleaning products with harsh chemicals, mould spores in damp areas of the house such as the bathroom and laundry. Not to mention, the most common trigger of all - dust mites.

By simply being aware, sufferers can be-

gin to create an efficient prevention plan to minimise the unpleasant effects of asthma.

## Clean your home weekly

The idea of a detailed 'spring clean' once a year is unfortunately not enough for someone living with asthma. Creating an asthma allergy friendly home, combined with the use of medications can give families a head start when dealing with asthma and allergies.

It is the simple things that make living with asthma easier. Obvious triggers are easily rectified, dusting regularly with microfiber cloths can minimise the chances of causing an attack, and The National Asthma Council of Australia also recommends allowing someone without asthma to do the cleaning.

## Dampness and mould

Mould is a major trigger in Australia as is prevalent throughout many Australian homes. It reproduces by tiny particles called 'spores' becoming airborne and causes problems when inhaled by people with allergies and asthma.

Ensuring that bathrooms and areas prone to damp are cleaned once a week to destroy potential mould growth is important. Regularly steam cleaning of surfaces and furnishings is also a great way to address this without using irritating chemicals.

A prevention plan in the home is a key way to combat the effects that asthma can have and perhaps the most successful. It is more effective than trying to reverse symptoms after they have already occurred.

LEIGH LIVINGSTONE

editorial@mediaplanet.com

## TIPS

### Create An Allergy Friendly Home

- Steam cleaning your bathroom, floors and kitchen areas is a great way to clean without using harsh chemicals
- Dust surfaces with a microfiber cloth each week
- Wash your bedlinen in temperatures above 55°C
- Vacuum your floor regularly with a vacuum fitted with a HEPA filter

- Use cleaning products that do not contain irritants or harsh chemicals
- Use a dehumidifier to reduce mould and humidity in your home

### Did You Know?

- Exposure to damp areas that have mould can trigger asthma symptoms

Source: National Asthma Council Australia

# Steam Cleaning – A Healthy Choice

As much as we might try to keep our home perfectly clean all the time, life gets in the way. With busy schedules, it's hard to find the time to scrub the house from top to bottom. Even worse, killing troublesome germs and bacteria can require the use of harsh, dangerous chemicals, which must be stored away from arms reach. With all these impediments it's easy to see how occasional spot cleaning can become the norm, leading to a build-up of trouble spots throughout the house.

Thankfully the last few years has seen some major developments in a technology that makes cleaning safe, simple and cost effective; steam. By superheating purified water, steam cleaners effectively kill bacteria and germs as well as lift dirt from every surface without harming it. Kärcher have perfected these machines and are now able to provide a total cleaning solution. The entry level steam cleaner retails at \$299 and is available from The Good Guys and Kambos, offers 1500W and 3.2 bar pressure and includes every attachment needed to clean every room in your

house. The top model (RRP \$549) includes a pressurised steam iron and allows for continual refill, meaning you don't need to stop cleaning to let the boiler cool down when the water runs out - you just remove the container and refill and away you go!

## One machine, every surface.

Steam can be used to clean almost every part of your home. Tiles, hard floors, carpets, fabric, upholstery, even outdoor furniture and decking; you name it, steam is the answer. Machines like the Kärcher steam cleaners feature a variable steam control, meaning you can tailor the output to your needs. Use a gentle stream to sanitise and de-odourise furniture and clothing, then turn it up to remove heavy dirt and stains.

## No chemicals: better health, environmentally friendly

Removing the most stubborn stains often requires the use of harsh chemicals, which can be dangerous to work with, harmful to children and have a serious impact on the



environment. Using steam means you can clean without the toll on your health or conscience. Superheated particles of water penetrate deep into any non heat-sensitive surface, destroying 99.99% of bacteria. No more chemicals down the stormwater drain or in reach of inquisitive kids.

## Save money and time

Chances are that every house has a laundry or kitchen cupboard filled with half emp-

ty cleaning products and obscure specialist chemicals. The versatility and power of steam lets you throw away those old bottles. You'll time saved using a steam cleaner instead of laborious scrubbing and mopping, meaning more time for the important things in life.

Steam has been used as a cleaning solution in professional circles for decades, and the days of clanking, industrial contraptions are long gone. Modern steam machines are fast to heat up, easy to use, quiet, compact and completely chemical free, with the versatility to clean any and everything that springs to mind. With better products entering the market every year, there's no reason for home consumers to miss out on the benefits to your health, home and hip pocket. Check out Kärcher's range of steam cleaners at [www.karcher.com.au](http://www.karcher.com.au), or in store at The Good Guys and Kambos.

SPONSORED EDITORIAL

**KÄRCHER**  
makes a difference

**THE GOOD GUYS**  
More lifestyle for less

**KAMBO'S**  
More lifestyle for less

INSIGHT

# What's In Your Bed?

Dust mites are everywhere but don't panic yet. Many allergy and asthma sufferers are unaware that one of the biggest triggers of their symptoms can be found in high traffic areas around the home, especially prevalent in beds and mattresses.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates that the average person spends around 30 per cent of their life in bed, which guarantees that everyone comes into contact with microscopic creatures like dust mites and other allergen causing species such as mould regularly.

A 2012 study from GlaxoSmithKline showed that 42 per cent of asthma sufferers had woken up at night due to symptoms.

### The mighty mite

Everyone has heard of dust mites. Allergy and asthma sufferers are very aware of them, but not everyone understands what they really do. The house dust mite gets its name from its food source. Dust is generally composed of shed skin flakes, which is a dust mite's favourite and primary food source. This is why beds and mattresses in particular will have a high mite population. They enjoy living in a warm, dark and humid environment in which they can thrive.

It is a common misconception what it is about dust mites that can trigger asthma and

other respiratory conditions. They don't bite; it is actually their bodies and secretions (droppings) that contain particular proteins that may trigger symptoms in susceptible people.

Mould is also a common cause of allergens and it thrives in the same conditions as the dust mite. During the night the human body temperature rises, which increases the humidity in the bed and therefore, the risk of mould.

Once mould is formed on or in a mattress, it is recommended that the mattress should be thrown away immediately. Mould is extremely difficult to get rid of and can be dangerous to allergy sufferers and people with respiratory conditions.

The mould and dampness also encourages the dust mite to breed further, as the mites find themselves living in ideal conditions. In an unprotected bed, dust mites live 'the dust mite dream,' enjoying an abundance of food in the perfect climate.

### Controlling the critters

Coming into contact with dust mites and mould may be unavoidable but it needn't be panic-inducing news. There are now effective ways of controlling them. Covering mattresses, quilts and pillowcases with mite-resistant cases and also washing these regularly, will avoid having to ex-

TIP

2

ELIMINATE TRIGGERS SUCH AS MOULD AND DUST MITES IN THE HOME

pensively replace items often, and will protect respiratory health effectively.

The National Asthma Council of Australia also recommends opening curtains and airing bedding in sunshine, as well as washing pillowcases and sheets weekly in water hotter than 55 degrees. Doing a hot wash will not only kill the mites but also ensure that the allergen causing proteins are removed.

When it comes to minimising exposure to mites, these small easy steps mentioned above can significantly reduce exposure to dust mites and improve your family's health.

LEIGH LIVINGSTONE  
editorial@mediaplanet.com



### TIPS

#### Controlling Dust Mites

- Wash your bedding linen in a hot wash over 55°C
- Avoid bedding products that cannot be regularly washed
- Use dust mite protection covers for your quilts, pillows and mattresses
- Wash your bed linen on a weekly basis
- Keep your bedding simple, don't have unnecessary cushions and pillows

### DID YOU KNOW?

#### Dust Mites Facts

- House dust mites are the most common allergic trigger for asthma in Australia
- The greatest exposure you can have to dust mites is from your bedding
- Sufferers are not allergic to the actual dust mite but are allergic to their droppings
- A hot wash of over 55°C will kill dust mites and their allergen
- Dry cleaning and cold washing will kill the dust mites, but not the allergen they produce

Sponsored Editorial

Dead skin, mould and dust mites vacuumed from unprotected quilt, mattress and pillow

Fungal sample picked from unprotected quilt, mattress and pillow

Fungal growth in controlled laboratory

## What lives in our mattresses?

We go to bed to rest and restore yet many people are unaware that their sleep environment and bedding (more specifically what lives in our mattresses, quilts and pillows) can actually make you sick! What lives in our mattresses can set off allergic reactions such as sneezing, asthma attacks and skin disorders such as eczema!

Thirty percent (30%) of Australians are allergic to dust mites. The common household dustmite and its allergens (specifically their faeces) – along with residual mould in unprotected mattresses, pillows and quilts – make up the two most common triggers known for allergies and asthma.

In 2010, Protect-A-Bed® commissioned laboratory tests by an independent Mould specialist, Mycologia. These tests (pictured above) on two (2) six-month old mattresses demonstrated that even at such an early age - both mattresses contained concentrations of fungi (mould) and bacteria as well as levels of moisture.

Protect-A-Bed® mattress, pillow and quilt protectors all contain a breathable and waterproof protective barrier to protect sleepers from the ecosystem that lives in mattresses, thereby ensuring a healthy and hygienic sleep. Protect-A-Bed® is proudly Australian-made and has partnerships with the National Asthma Council of Australia Sensitive Choice program, Eczema Association of Australasia Inc. and SIDS and Kids. Available at Target, Adairs, David Jones and leading bedding retailers. For more information visit [www.protectabed.com.au](http://www.protectabed.com.au)

## Got allergies?

### Don't go to bed without mattress, quilt and pillow protection!

Do you wake up sneezing, wheezing, have nasal congestion or irritated eyes? Then you may be one of the millions of Australians who suffer from allergies.

Dust mites and mould are two leading allergy and asthma triggers. Defeat them with the world's number one selling mattress, quilt and pillow protectors from Protect-A-Bed®.

The Protect-A-Bed® range of protectors include a built-in waterproof and breathable allergy barrier, providing a Healthy Sleep Zone Solution for allergies, bed wetting, incontinence, eczema and sensitive skin, as well as stains from bacteria, mould and spills.

Do you have any Sleep-health questions? Speak with our Registered Nurse online at [nurse@protectabed.com.au](mailto:nurse@protectabed.com.au)

Call: 1300 857 123 | [www.protectabed.com.au](http://www.protectabed.com.au)  
Available at Target, Adairs, David Jones and all good bedding stores.

**PROTECT-A-BED®**  
HEALTHY SLEEP ZONE SOLUTIONS™

## NEWS

Allergies are surprisingly common in Australia, with around 1 in 3 Australians suffering from an allergy at some point in their life\*. With some of the highest allergy and asthma rates in the world, Australian families are searching for new ways to protect their families.

# Wash Your Allergy Worries Away

Infants and small children are particularly susceptible to asthma and allergy, with asthma alone now affecting approximately 10 per cent of Australian kids\*\*. The impact of these types of allergies can be disruptive and traumatic for families, and trying to stay on top of an allergy can be difficult. The fact is that while allergies cannot be cured, prevention in the home is a key factor for protecting your family.

## Eliminating allergens in the home

We're learning more every day about the common triggers for allergies, such as dust mites, and how they can be reduced or avoided. In light of these allergy rates and customer demand for ways to reduce common triggers in the home, many companies are creating specifically designed products which eliminate allergens in the home.

## Turn up the heat

We know that dust mites are a major trigger of asthma and allergies and that they



Source: Mitey Fresh

are often found in bed linen. Whilst washing bed linen in a cold wash may eliminate dust mites, it is simply not effective for eliminating the allergens the dust mites produce. Many people believe that the actual dust mite is the trigger; however it is their droppings that are the true trigger for an allergy sufferer.

According to ASKO's National Product Manager James Vogdanos, to eliminate the triggers completely it is important that fab-

rics are washed in temperatures exceeding 55 Degrees Celsius. This ensures that both the dust mite and the trigger are both effectively eliminated from the fabric.

As allergies increase in Australia, even large companies are recognising the importance of allergy prevention in the home. Approved by the National Asthma Council Australia's Sensitive Choice program and recommended by the Swedish Asthma

Foundation, ASKO's 'Allergy Washer' operates between 55C and 90C to kill and remove dust mites from clothing and household items while it's higher rinsing levels help remove detergent residue. Thanks to these innovative allergy friendly products like this, families can live in a fresh and hygienic home.

Ensure that you are protecting your family from triggers by asking questions about the products you keep in your home and choosing products that are allergy friendly. As winter time approaches, more hospitalisations occur in children with respiratory health problems. It is a crucial time for Australians to effectively organise their homes so that they can minimise risk and stress throughout the cooler months.

\*www.allergy.org.au

\*\*National Asthma Council Australia

SOURCE: ASKO

editorial@mediaplanet.com

**ASKO**

## THE ASKO W6888 ALLERGY WASHER

DESIGNED WITH YOUR HEALTH IN MIND

Approved by Sensitive Choice® and recommended by the Swedish Asthma Foundation, the ASKO Allergy Washer has been specifically designed to assist people suffering from asthma and allergies.



3 ALLERGY PROGRAMS

Special wash and cleaning cycles.



INTERMEDIATE SPIN

Extra rinses and intermediate spins remove more detergent residue.



SMARTSEAL™

No rubber bellows that can trap dirt and grime.



STAINLESS STEEL DRUMS

More hygienic and longer lasting than plastic.



Visit [www.asko.com.au](http://www.asko.com.au) to find out more.



Approved by the National Asthma Council Australia's Sensitive Choice® Program.

# Being Breathless Is Not Okay

Trouble breathing is never ok, particularly if the problem persists. New studies in Western Australia have shown that "pulmonary arterial hypertension is far more common than we once thought" says Geoff Strange, CEO of The Pulmonary Hypertension Society ANZ.

One of the main issues in cases of Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH) is misdiagnosis. According to The Pulmonary Hypertension Society, around 33% of cases of PAH were misdiagnosed with asthma. The second issue is a delay in diagnosis, with many cases being diagnosed during an autopsy.

## What is pulmonary arterial hypertension?

PAH is a chronic and life-changing disease that can lead to right heart failure if left untreated. The symptoms for all types of PAH may be similar, and symptoms are usually more severe as the disease progresses including breathlessness, chest pain, dizziness and a dry cough.

Pulmonary hypertension (PH) can be difficult to diagnose in a routine medical examination with your GP because the most common symptoms of PH are also associated with many other conditions such as asthma. If you feel that your medication is not working or that you may have been misdiagnosed, it is vital to persist in finding answers for your health. As Geoff Strange says, "Breathlessness of an unknown reason is not ok" and it is important

to get to the bottom of any breathing difficulties you may be experiencing. If your breathing doesn't feel right, it is essential to investigate it further.

MISCHA WATTS

editorial@mediaplanet.com



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Sensitive Choice® blue butterfly symbol is a way of recognising products and services from companies that support asthma and allergy care. Products that carry the blue butterfly may be better choices for people with asthma and allergies.

If you see the blue butterfly when shopping, stop for a moment and think about your family's asthma and allergy care:

- Do you know your triggers?
- Are you taking steps to reduce your exposure to your triggers?
- Have you had an asthma and allergy review with your doctor recently?
- Do you follow your asthma or allergy action plan?

For more information about the Sensitive Choice program visit the website [www.nationalasthma.org.au](http://www.nationalasthma.org.au)

Source: National Asthma Council Australia

# NEWS

Steam cleaning is the fast and easy solution for anyone who wants to live in a clean and hygienic home but is particularly beneficial for allergy sufferers. It is especially recommended for people with asthma or respiratory conditions as it eliminates the need to use irritating chemicals that may be harmful for people with these conditions.

## The Brilliance of Steam

**H**eated steam kills microscopic organisms, such as mould and fungal spores, at an early stage before they become harmful germs and bacteria. Heated steam also kills dust mites found in soft furnishings such as mattresses and carpets.

### Money saver

Steam is made using ordinary tap water, costing you only a few cents per litre. By replacing most of the chemical-based cleaners, you save hundreds of dollars in grocery costs.

### Environmentally friendly

By using steam, harsh detergents are not washed down into the sink and released into our precious rivers and water ways where they can harm aquatic life. By cleaning with steam, we also help to reduce the carbon footprint caused by packaging material from cleaning products that often find their way into landfills.



Steam cleaning eliminates the need to use irritating chemicals that may be harmful for people with asthma or allergies.

Every litre of water generates hundreds of litres of steam. With much more steam than the equivalent amount of water, you clean a much larger surface area which helps to conserve water in areas where water is either in scarce supply or costly.

### Family friendly

There is growing concern about the harmful

effects to our health from chemicals found in domestic cleaning products. These toxic chemicals also trigger allergic reactions amongst people with respiratory or skin sensitivities, so eliminating the use of chemicals in a household can help eczema sufferers too.

MISCHA WATTS

editorial@mediaplanet.com



### FACTS

#### Lung Foundation Australia

Lung Foundation Australia is a national organisation which provides support to everyone in Australia with a lung disease. Lung Foundation Australia exists to help those living with lung disease and their carers; to bring together the leaders in respiratory medicine within Australia; and to generate awareness about the importance of positive lung health within the community.

If you think you are at risk of lung disease, you can check your lung health today with the Lung Foundation's interactive 'Lung Health Checklist' on the website or talk to your doctor.

- ➔ Lung disease kills over 50 Australians each day
- ➔ COPD is a lung disease that affects almost 13% or one in seven Australians 40 or over
- ➔ COPD is the second leading cause of avoidable hospital admissions
- ➔ Lung cancer alone accounts for one in every five deaths due to cancer (19%)

LUNG FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

www.lungfoundation.com.au



## Monster Steam Products

The innovation that makes cleaning chemical free, easier, quieter and more efficient





Monster Steam Products are designed and made by Euroflex Italy, a leading global specialist in the manufacturing of steam products. Competitively priced and built to a high level of quality, the Monster Steam Products are a healthy choice for Australian families because:

- The superheated steam kills microscopic organisms such as mould and fungal spores at an early stage, before they become harmful germs and bacteria in your home
- Steam kills dust mites found in soft furnishings such as mattresses and carpets
- Steam eliminates allergy causing microscopic organisms from your home

The healthy cleaning choice for asthma and allergy sufferers

**monster**  
by euroflex italy

1800 663 866  
www.euroflex.com.au

## CHALLENGES

A Deeper Look  
Into COPD

USE A NEBULISER  
TO EFFECTIVELY  
ADMINISTER YOUR  
PREVENTATIVE  
MEDICATION DEEP  
INSIDE YOUR LUNG

■ **Question:** What is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease?

■ **Answer:** Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) describes irreversible, long-term lung conditions that cause shortness of breath, such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

It is 2am. You cannot breathe. You sit up and open your mouth wide to draw in air, but it feels like breathing through a straw. You panic, making breathing more difficult, so you start gasping. With scared eyes and a gaping mouth, you grope around for your inhaler, but this starts you on a coughing fit until your medication kicks in. You eventually fall asleep, still lightly gasping, knowing that you will not be getting much sleep tonight, despite constant fatigue. Welcome to the life of an advanced COPD sufferer.

#### What Does It Do To The Lungs?

Emphysema causes damage to the air sacs (alveoli) in your lungs, which reduces the surface area available for the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide. Your airways weaken and will constrict when you breathe out. This means you will have air

trapped in your lungs, which interferes with the ability to absorb oxygen.

In chronic bronchitis, there is an increase of mucous production in the lungs, which narrows the airways. Chronic bronchitis also causes regular inflammation, which, after a while, causes scarring and thickening of lung tissue.

#### Who Can Get COPD?

COPD can affect young and old, male and female. The Australian Lung Foundation states that it affects around 1 in 7 Australians. Symptoms, including chronic cough, phlegm production, shortness of breath, rasping and fatigue are often overlooked. Even in the later stages, many people assume they have smoker's cough or asthma.

#### The Causes

COPD is heavily associated with tobacco smoking, and about half of all smokers will develop some form of COPD; however, you do not have to be a smoker to develop it. Environmental exposure to pollutants, chemicals, fumes and dusts contribute to COPD. Around 2% of COPD sufferers have a genetic disposition to COPD.

#### How To Treat COPD

While COPD is incurable, it can be managed. Quitting smoking is the main priority of COPD patients, and this will prevent further decline in lung function. Most of the medications for COPD are in inhalant form. Because it is often very difficult for COPD sufferers to use an inhaler effectively, it is recommended that they also use a spacer - which allows all of the medication to be inhaled, and prevents the medication making contact with the back of the throat and mouth. The use of a nebuliser with a facemask or mouthpiece is also very helpful, as they allow patients to breathe in a normal manner while inhaling their medications.

Medications for COPD combined with the use of a nebuliser or spacer are highly effective. Combined with a smoke-free lifestyle, regular exercise, pulmonary rehabilitation and healthy eating, there is a good chance that your symptoms will remain stable and allow you to enjoy your life again.

JASMIN LEETE

editorial@mediaplanet.com



#### DID YOU KNOW?

##### What Should Australians Know About COPD?

➔ Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a disease for which there is no cure. It is a progressive disease that severely diminishes a patient's quality of life. People with a history of smoking should have regular spirometry testing with their GPs from the age of 30. Most patients with early stage COPD think they have asthma (in particular men) and often treat the symptoms with Ventolin. By the time the symptoms have progressed the patient has significant COPD.

##### How Important Is Early Diagnosis?

➔ Early diagnosis is key as most patients only prevent with symptoms when their Fev1 has reduced to around 50% - one lung lost at this stage. Early detection allows early treatment which slows the progression of the disease state, reducing exacerbation rates and increasing the quality of life.

##### What Can Be Done To Prevent COPD?

➔ The one main thing to prevent COPD is by not smoking. However, once COPD has been diagnosed, exercise is of significant benefit when still possible. Exercise encourages the removal of phlegm by the body naturally.

MAHA JOMA

Ebos Healthcare

# Lung Cancer In Australia

Around 10,000 Australians are diagnosed with Lung Cancer each year. Men are almost twice as likely to be diagnosed with lung cancer as women are. The prognosis for lung cancer has improved in Australia. However, lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer deaths in both Australian men and women.

As with many types of cancer, we don't always know the causes of lung cancer. How-

ever, there are some known risk factors for developing lung cancer. We know that smoking (or exposure to smoke) causes up to 90% of lung cancers in men and about 65% of lung cancers in women. Other risk factors include exposure to asbestos, radiation, air pollution such as dust and fumes.

The symptoms for lung cancer can vary. However, lung cancer patients often experience a persistent chest infection or a cough

that won't go away; coughing up blood; breathlessness or a shortness of breath with activity; weight loss; and low energy levels or fatigue. Having any one of these symptoms does not necessarily mean you have cancer. Symptoms may be caused by other conditions (not lung disease) or be side effects of smoking.

LUNG FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

www.lungfoundation.com.au



## Econ-o-mist<sup>®</sup> Forte Nebuliser Therapy System

Comes complete with tubing, jet nebuliser bowl and double mask for child and adult

2 year warranty

Available at your local pharmacy

